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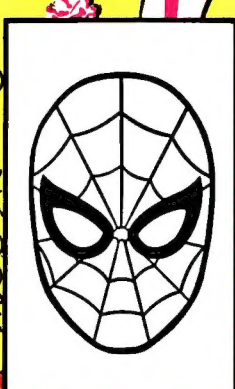
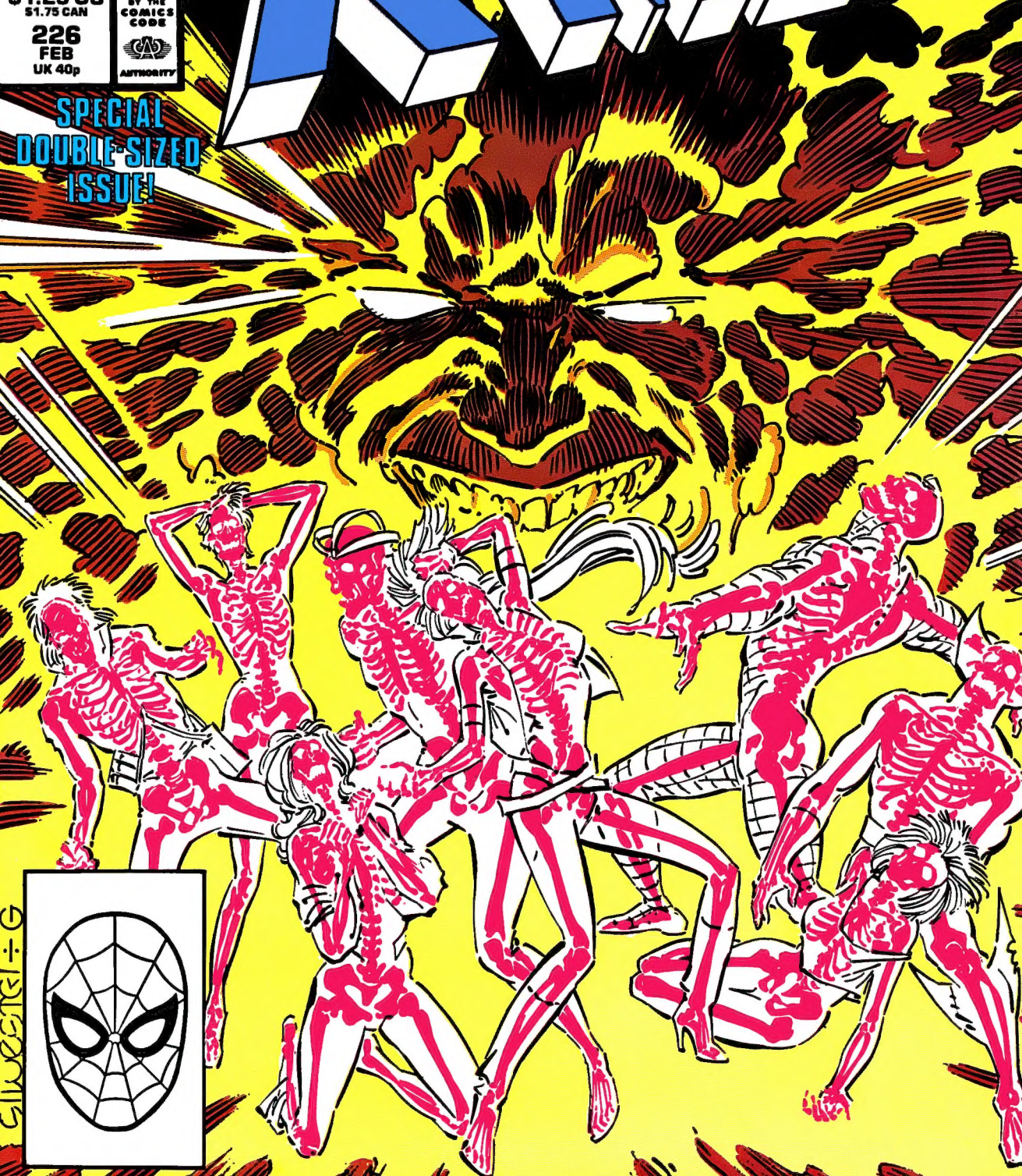


**SPECIAL**  
**DOUBLE-SIZED**  
**ISSUE!**

# THE FALL OF THE MUTANTS

## THE UNCANNY

# X-MEN®





*The LOBBY--  
EAGLE TOWER...*

SOMETIMES...

...WOLVERINE HATES  
HIS MUTANT POWER,  
THE ABILITY TO HEAL  
VIRTUALLY ANY WOUND.  
BECAUSE WITHOUT IT,  
HE'D BE DEAD NOW...

... INSTEAD OF  
SCREAMING SILENTLY  
IN AGONY AS HIS  
BODY KNITS ITSELF  
BACK TOGETHER.

HE'S BEEN HURT BEFORE,  
LOTS OF TIMES-- BUT  
RARELY AS BADLY AS THIS.

HE SENSES DEEP DOWN--  
IN HIS BONES THAT  
CAN'T BE BROKEN--  
THAT THE WORST IS  
YET TO COME.

BUT IF HE YIELDS  
TO THE SHADOWS  
WITHIN HIS MIND--  
THE TRANSITORY  
OBLIVION OF A  
HEALING COMA--  
WHO'LL LEAD THE  
X-MEN?

THEY NEED HIM.

HE UNDERSTANDS THAT.

SO HE FIGHTS TO STAY  
AWAKE, IN CONTROL,  
IN COMMAND.

HATING  
EVERY  
MOMENT.

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HOLD STILL, SHAPE-CHANGER, OR I'LL TIE YOU UP SO TIGHT YOU'LL BLEED!

IF MYSTIQUE DOESN'T SHUT UP, MADELYNE, GAG HER, OKAY?

I'M A FEDERAL AGENT, MS. PRYOR...

...WITH A LAWFUL WARRANT FOR THE X-MEN'S ARREST.

RESISTING LIKE THIS ONLY MAKES MATTERS WORSE FOR YOU ALL!

I WILL BUILD A REDOUBT TO PROTECT WOLVERINE.

HAVOK, WHAT IS HAPPENING OUTSIDE?

NOTHING.

THIS IS CRAZY!

MYSTIQUE'S FREEDOM FORCE GOONS ARE JUST STANDING AROUND.

THE WORLD'S TURNED UPSIDE-DOWN-- BECOME A NIGHTMARE WHERE WE X-MEN ARE VILLAINS...



...AND SOME OF OUR OLDEST ENEMIES, THE GOOD GUYS.

THEY'VE GOT THREE OF OURS PRISONER-- PSYLOCKE, DAZZLER AND ROGUE-- I WONDER IF WE CAN TRADE MYSTIQUE FOR 'EM? BUT WHAT DO WE DO THEN?

THAT OLD LADY-- THEIR PRECOG, DESTINY-- LOOKS PRETTY UPSET.

"WISH I COULD HEAR WHAT SHE'S SAYING."

...GONE ALL GONE...

...INNER SIGHT AS BLIND AND USELESS...



...AS MY EYES!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, WOMAN?

FOOL! SHE IS NOTHING, WE ARE NOTHING!

MY POWER, COMMANDO, IS TO "SEE" THE FUTURE.

IF YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT MYSTIQUE--?!

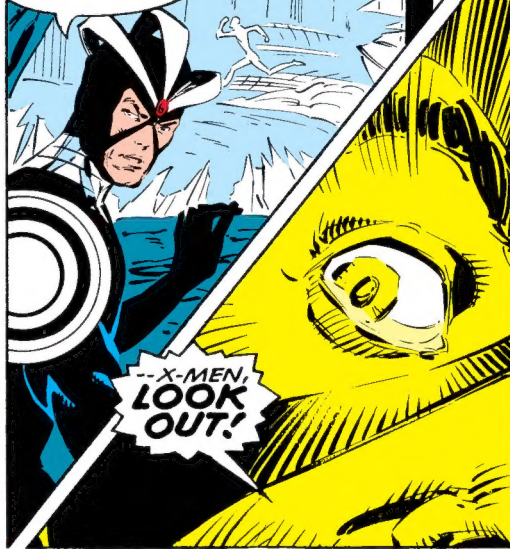
BUT FOR US, FOR THE X-MEN-- PERHAPS EVEN OUR WORLD--

--I SEE NONE!



HEADS UP, GUYS. THE SPEEDSTER-- SUPER-SABRE-- JUST TOOK OFF...

...PROBABLY TO COVER THE BACK DOOR--



--X-MEN, LOOK OUT!



CEILING'S COLLAPSING!

REALIZATION AND REACTION ARE AS ONE, A BOLT OF RAW ENERGY PLASMA FLASHING FROM HAVOK'S OUTTHRUST HANDS...

...TO DEAL WITH THE FALLING CONCRETE SLAB, WHILE...

SKAKOW!

MY ARMORED BODY WILL PROTECT YOU LADIES...

...FROM ANY FRAGMENTS.

ONLY THE BEGINNING, PEOPLE.

WOLVERINE!

ARE YOU NUTS?!

IF YOU DON'T GIVE YOUR HEALING FACTOR A DECENT CHANCE TO DO ITS JOB...

...YOU'LL NEVER RECOVER.

RISK I'LL HAVE TO TAKE, DARLIN'.

'CAUSE WE SURE CAN'T STAY PUT-- NOT WITH THIS FLAMIN' HUNDRED-STORY RUIN READY TO DROP ON OUR HEADS.

WHAT ABOUT ROGUE AND THE OTHERS?!

WE CAN'T JUST LEAVE THEM!

CONSIDERIN' THE ODDS, HAVOK, WE GOT NO CHOICE.

OF COURSE YOU HAVE A CHOICE, WOLVERINE.

FOR ONCE, YOU CAN BE SENSIBLE.

DESTINY'S PREDICTION IS THAT ANYONE WITHIN EAGLE TOWER AT DAWN WILL DIE!

IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?!

AT LEAST, BY SURRENDERING, YOU'LL BE SAFE!

THAT'S NOT A CHOICE, LADY, THAT'S A JOKE.

I'D SOONER TRUST A RABID DOG.

HAVE YOU AN ALTERNATIVE, COMRADE?

EXCUSE ME, TEAMMATES-- I HAVEN'T BEEN A PART OF YOUR WORLD FOR LONG...

... BUT IS YOUR DAYSTAR SUN SUPPOSED TO SHINE...

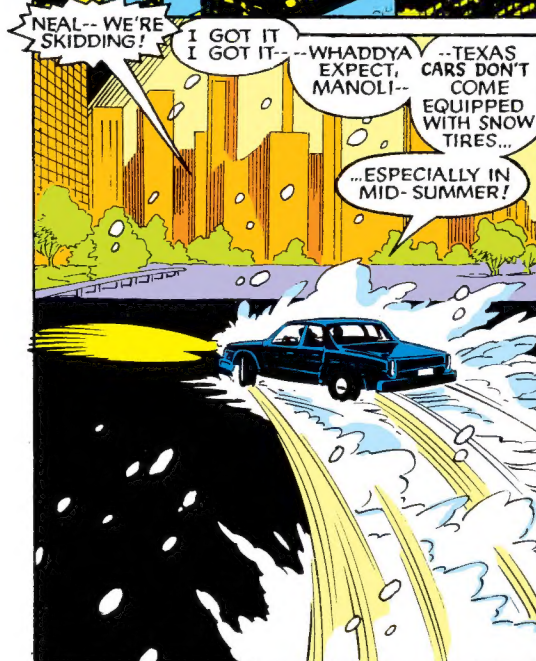
... IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT?



Stan Lee presents

# GO TELL THE SPARTANS

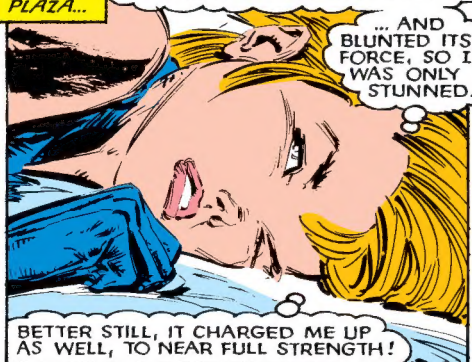
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TOM DEFALCO, EDITOR IN CHIEF





MEANWHILE, BACK AT EAGLE PLAZA...

WHEN SUPER-SABRE DECKED ME WITH HIS MICROSONIC BOOM, MY OWN POWER MUST HAVE ABSORBED THE BRUNT OF THE SHOCK WAVE...



... AND BLUNTED ITS FORCE, SO I WAS ONLY STUNNED.

BETTER STILL, IT CHARGED ME UP AS WELL, TO NEAR FULL STRENGTH!

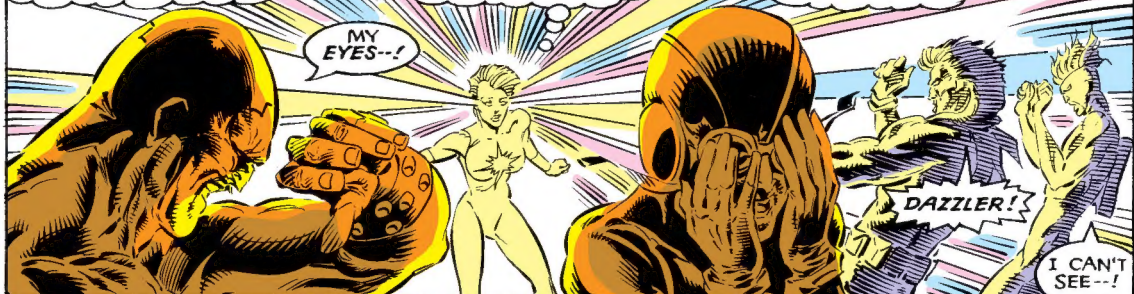
FREEDOM FORCE DOESN'T KNOW I'M CONSCIOUS! NOBODY'S LOOKING MY WAY.



I COULD PROBABLY SLIP AWAY EASILY.

BUT IF I DID-- WHAT ABOUT PSYLOCKE AND ROGUE--?

THIS ISN'T THE OCCASION FOR ANYTHING FANCY. JUST CLOBBER THE CREEPS HARD AS I CAN... ...WITH MY BRIGHTEST DAZZLE-FLASH!



MY EYES--!

DAZZLER!

I CAN'T SEE--!

DYNAMITE! THEY'LL BE SEEING NOTHING BUT SPOTS FOR A WHILE.

MORE'N ENOUGH TIME FOR OUR GETAWAY!

HEART'S HAMMERING AWAY-- I'M SCARED STIFF--



...SO WHAT ELSE IS NEW?

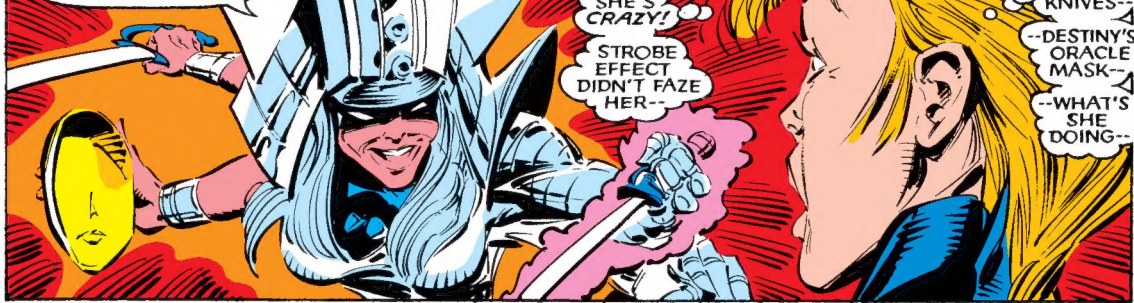
THE TRICK, I GUESS, IS TO COPE DESPITE THE FEAR.

NASTY NASTY LIGHTENGALE-- --TO STEAL SOUND AND BLAST IT BACK AS BLINDING LIGHT.



PAST DUE, MAYBE, FOR YOU TO LEARN...

...WHAT IT'S LIKE TO DANCE IN SHADOW! SPIRAL!



SHE'S CRAZY!

STROBE EFFECT DIDN'T FAZE HER--

--ALL THOSE KNIVES--

--DESTINY'S ORACLE MASK--

--WHAT'S SHE DOING--





--GET AWAY!!!

WHY COMPLAIN?

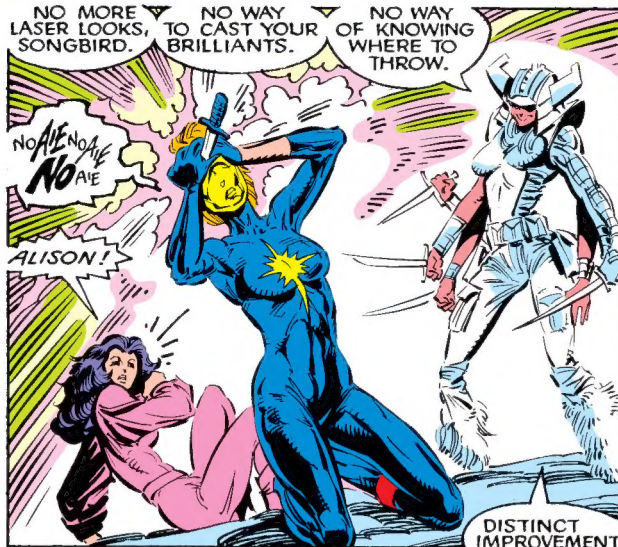
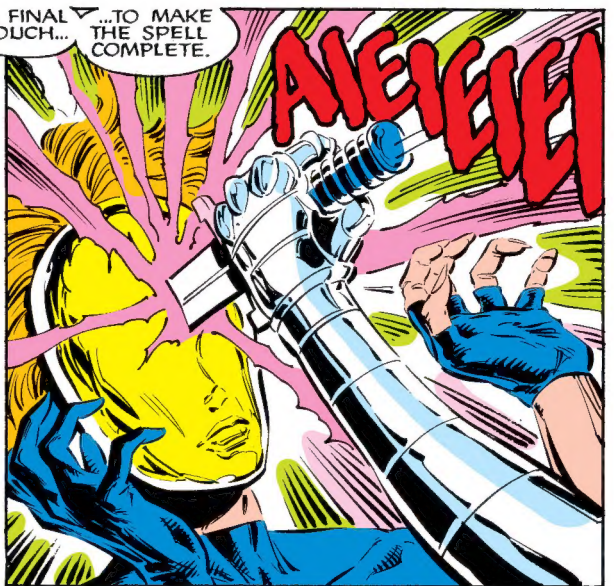
NEW FACE FOR OLD--

--PRETTIER BY FAR...

...AND ONE THAT WILL NEVER AGE!

A FINAL TOUCH...

...TO MAKE THE SPELL COMPLETE.



NO MORE LASER LOOKS, SONGBIRD.

NO WAY TO CAST YOUR BRILLIANTS.

NO WAY OF KNOWING WHERE TO THROW.

NO AIE NO AIE NO AIE

ALISON!

INHUMAN MONSTER-- YOU'VE MURDERED HER!

WANT TO BRAINSMASH ME, TELEPATH?

THINK AGAIN. TRY HARDER.



YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS ATROCITY, SPIRAL.

DOUBTFUL. SHE'S FAR FROM DEAD, AND HARDLY EVEN HURT.

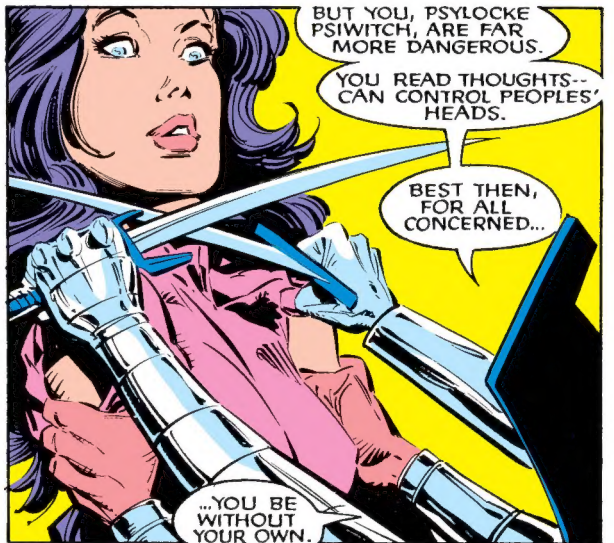


MORE THAN CAN BE SAID FOR YOU.

MASK IS REAL. BLADE IS NOT.

AT THE PROPER TIME, WITH THE PROPER ENCHANTMENT...

...BOTH CAN BE REMOVED.



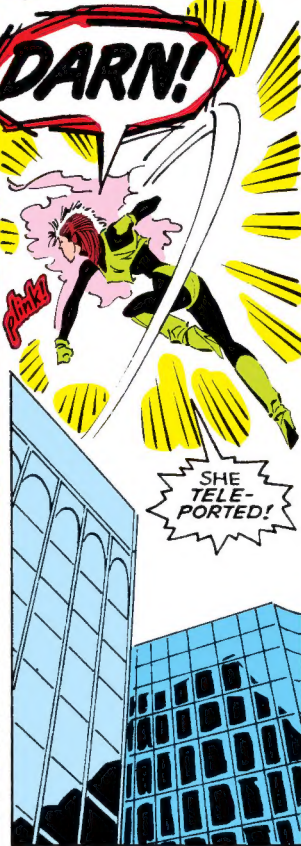
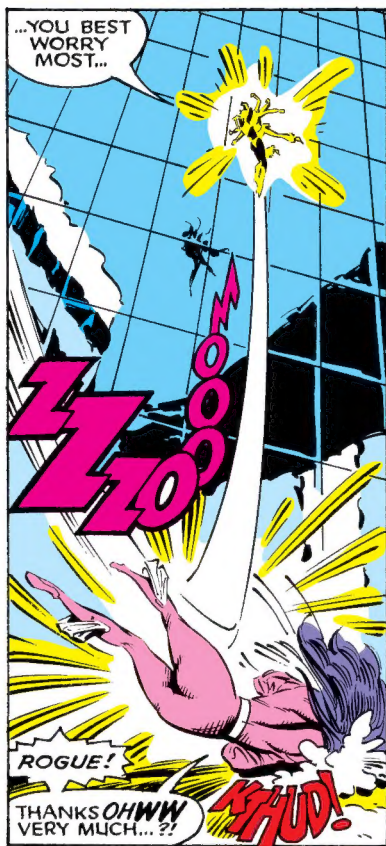
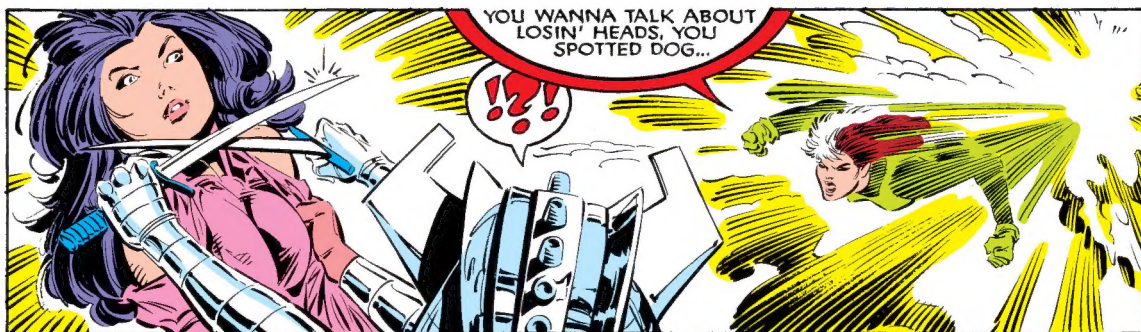
BUT YOU, PSYLOCKE PSIWITCH, ARE FAR MORE DANGEROUS.

YOU READ THOUGHTS-- CAN CONTROL PEOPLES' HEADS.

BEST THEN, FOR ALL CONCERNED...

...YOU BE WITHOUT YOUR OWN.

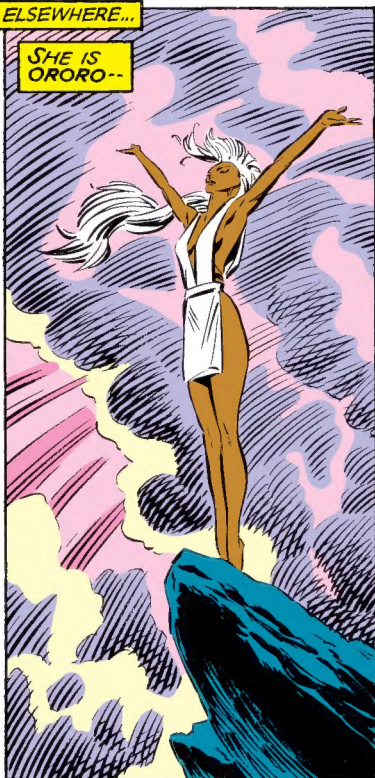






ELSEWHERE...

SHE IS  
ORORO--



--WHICH, IN HER  
NATIVE TONGUE,  
MEANS BEAUTY.



SHE IS  
CALLED  
STORM.



HE IS  
FORGE.

WHEN I  
WOKE UP...

... I THOUGHT  
I WAS  
DREAMING.



YOU MAY  
WELL BE.

OR  
I AM.

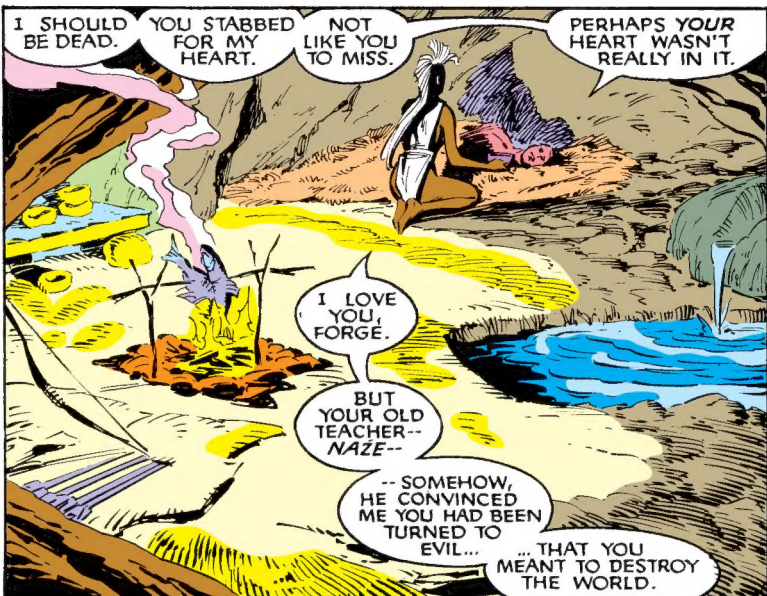
OR, PERHAPS,  
WE ARE BOTH  
DEAD, AND THIS  
IS PARADISE.

I SHOULD  
BE DEAD.

YOU STABBED  
FOR MY  
HEART.

NOT  
LIKE YOU  
TO MISS.

PERHAPS YOUR  
HEART WASN'T  
REALLY IN IT.

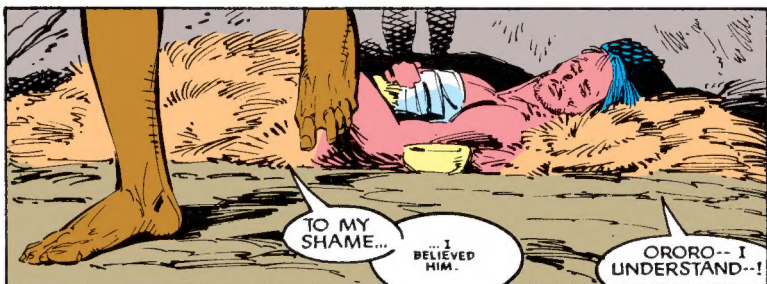


I LOVE  
YOU,  
FORGE.

BUT  
YOUR OLD  
TEACHER--  
NAZE--

-- SOMEHOW,  
HE CONVINCED  
ME YOU HAD BEEN  
TURNED TO  
EVIL...

... THAT YOU  
MEANT TO DESTROY  
THE WORLD.

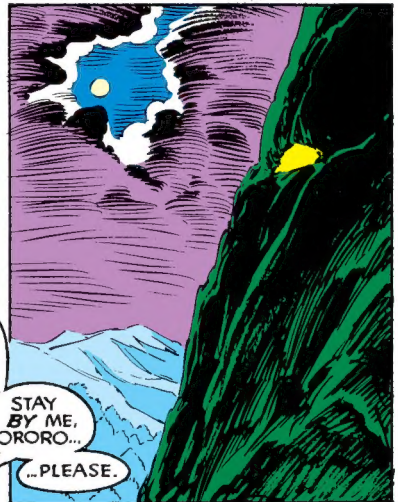
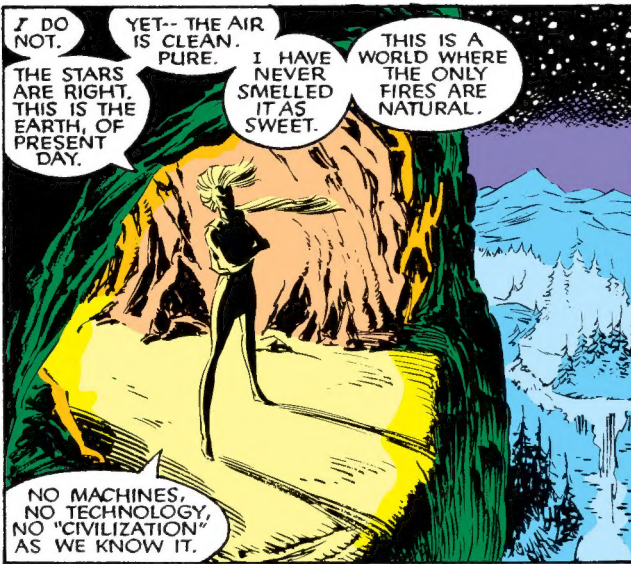


TO MY  
SHAME...

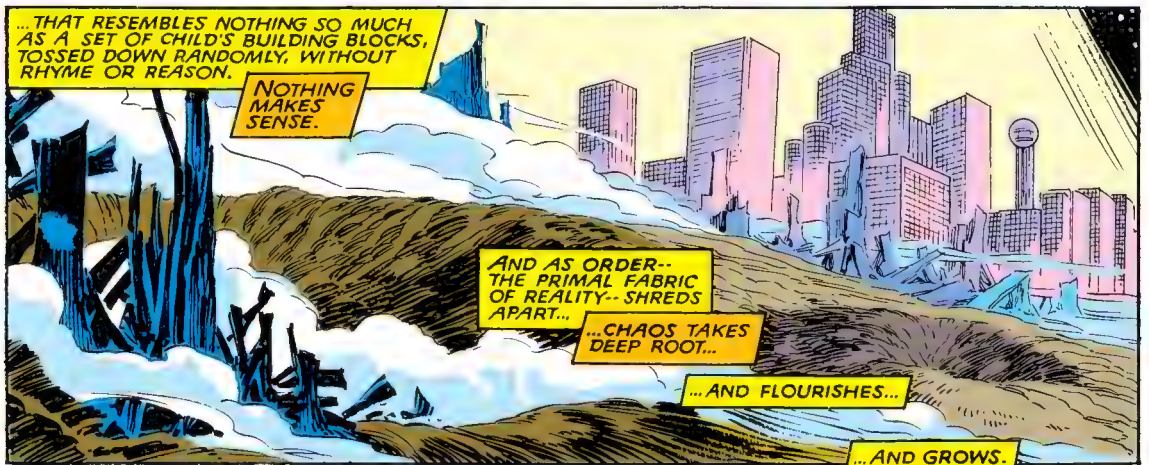
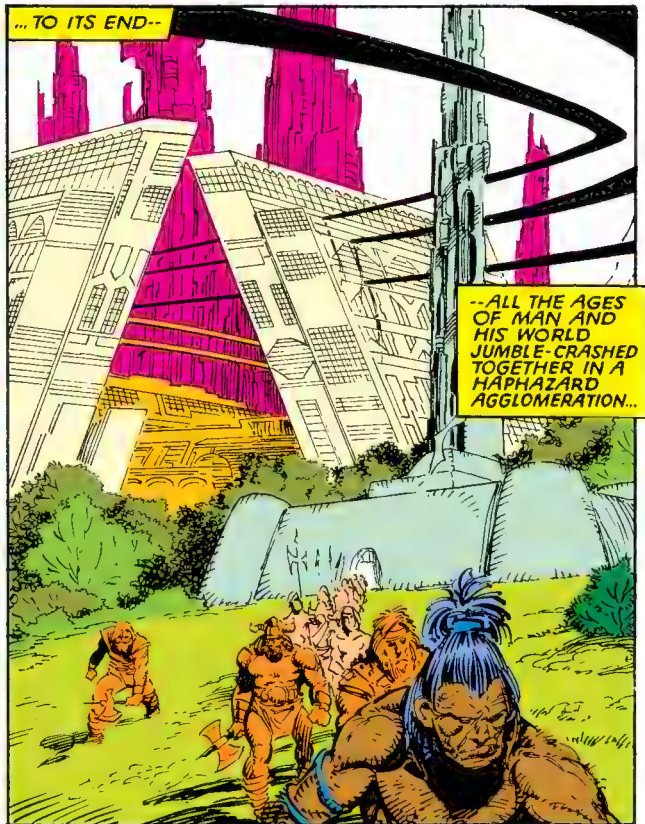
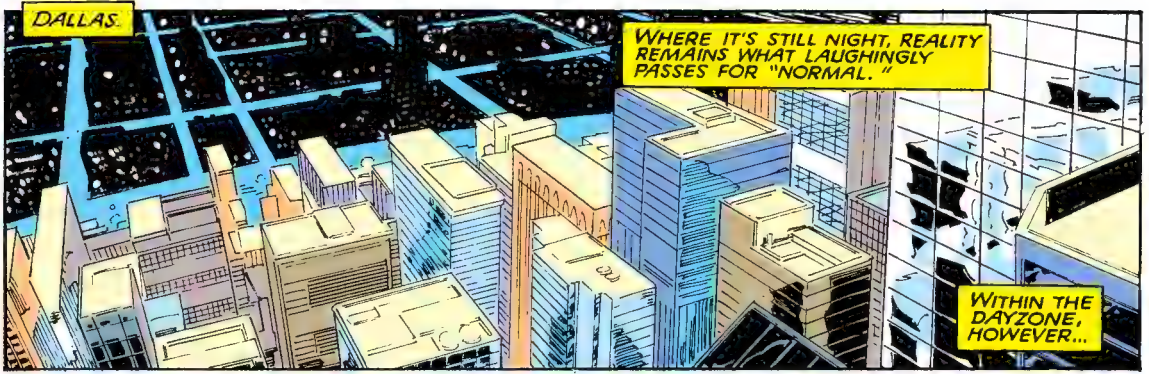
... I  
BELIEVED  
HIM.

ORORO-- I  
UNDERSTAND--!

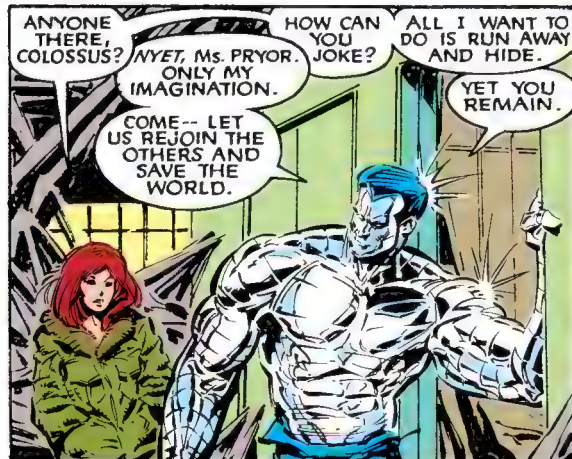
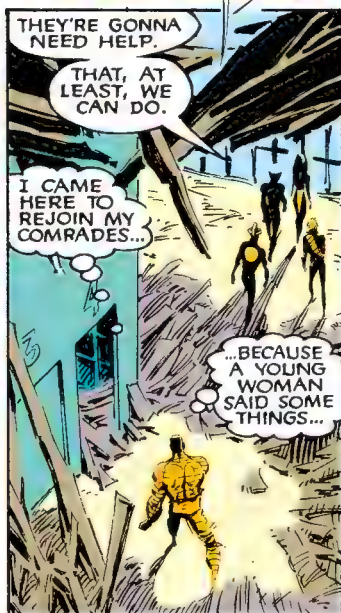
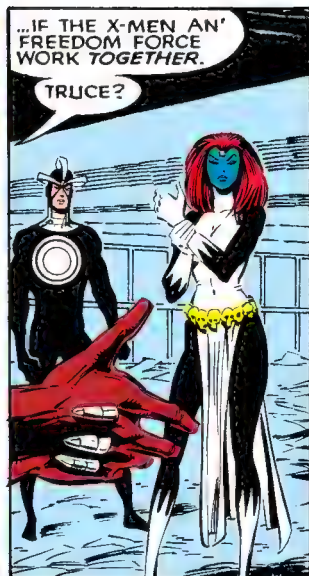
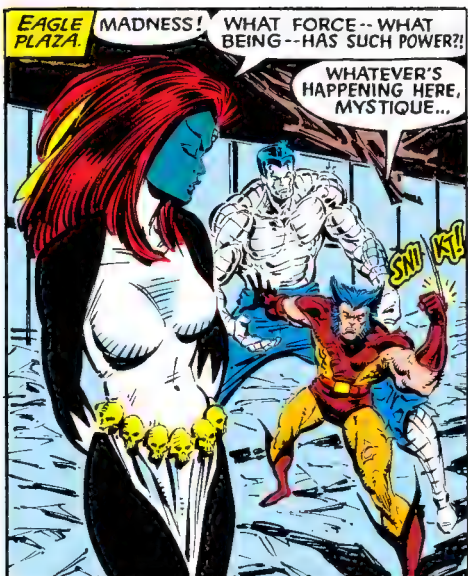




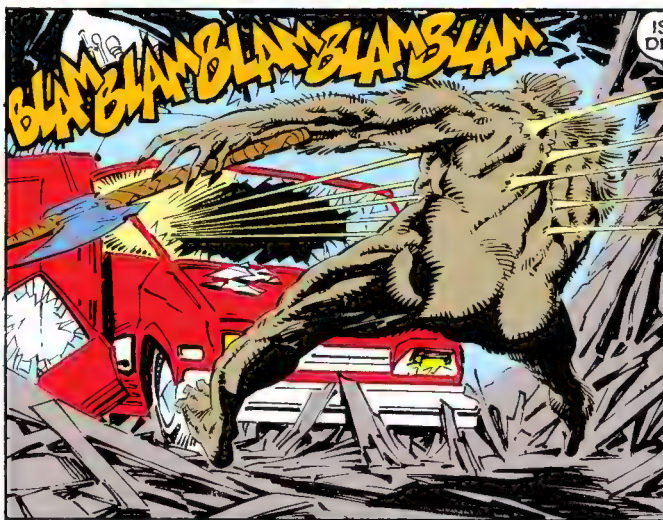
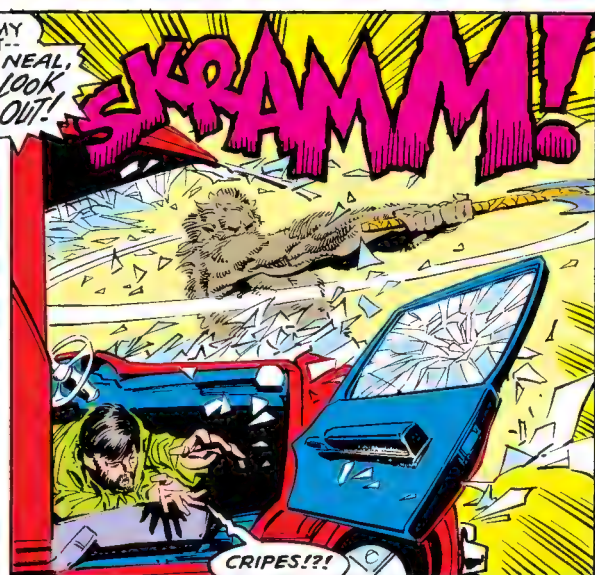
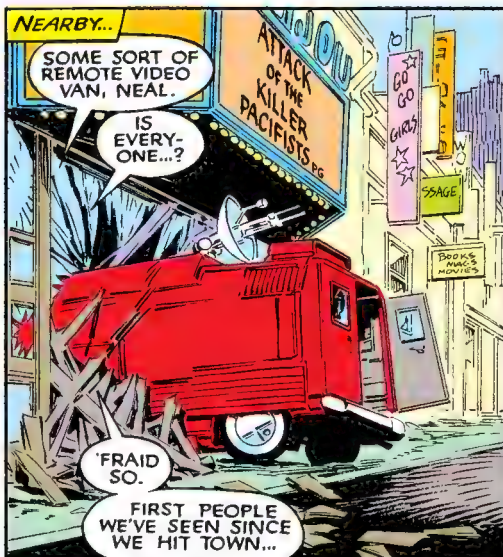












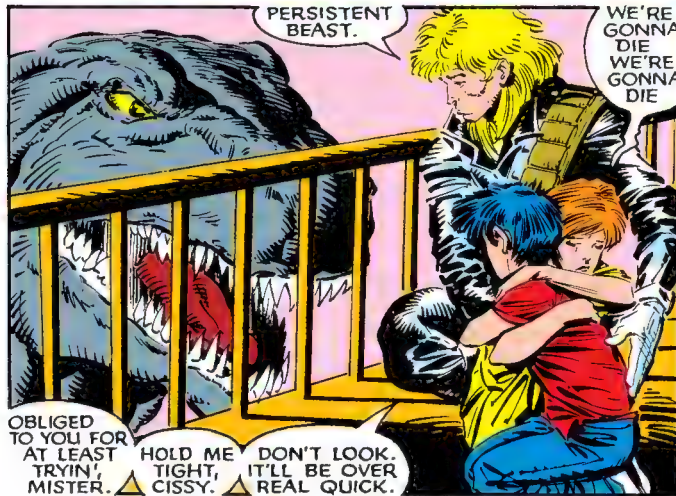
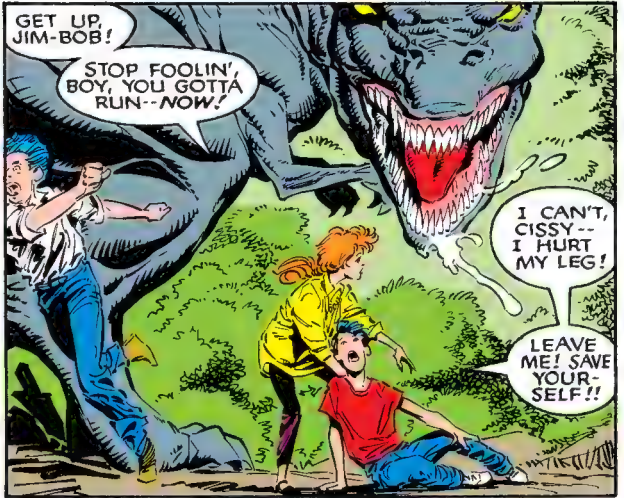


The  
GALLERIA--

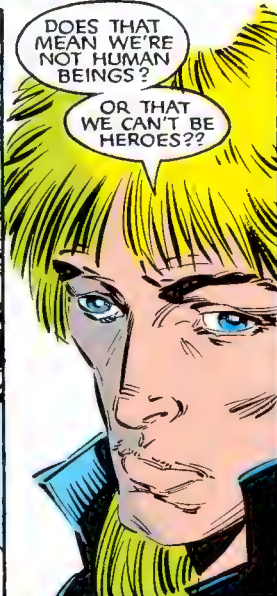
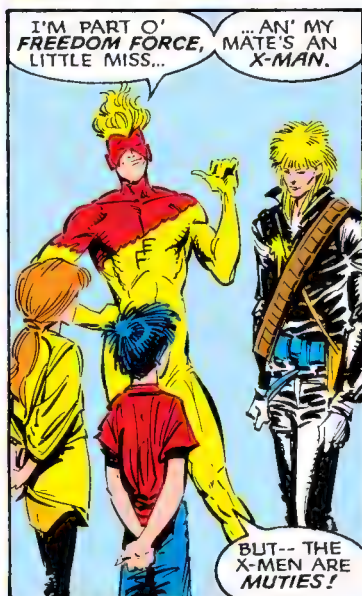
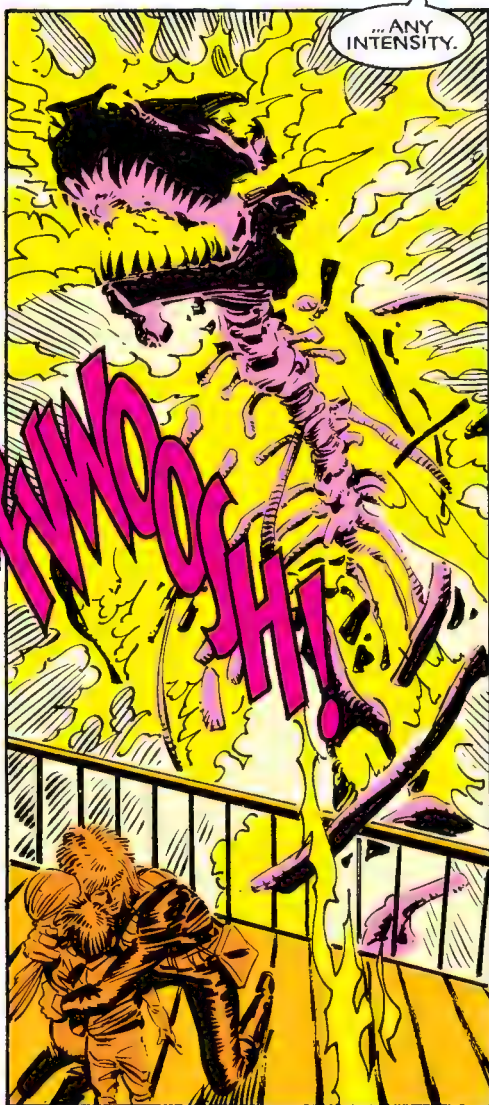
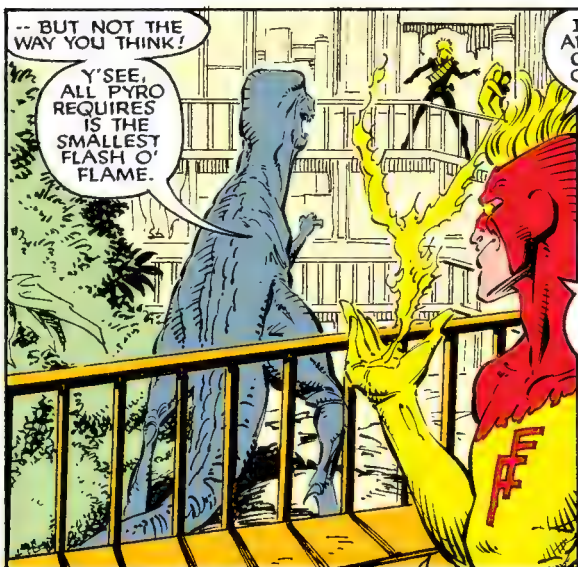
--TRANSFORMED BY THE  
ELDRITCH TIMEWAVES  
INTO HALF SHOPPING MALL...

... HALF PRE-  
HISTORIC  
JUNGLE...

... COMPLETE WITH  
A VERY HUNGRY,  
VERY ANNOYED  
TYRANNOSAURUS  
REX.









MEANWHILE,  
AT THE  
JUNCTION OF  
I-35 AND THE  
DALLAS NORTH  
TOLLWAY...

**BLAM BLAM BLAM**

**BUD DA BUD DA**  
**EEEOELL DEEEO**



THERE'S  
TOO MANY,  
RANGER!

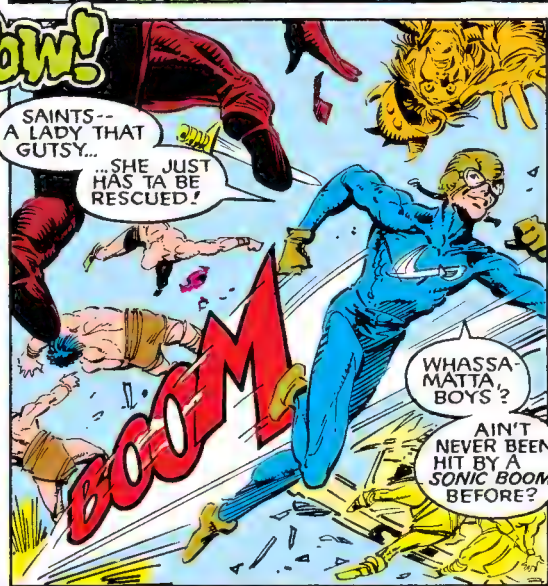
WE'LL  
NEVER  
HOLD  
EM!



**BLAM BLAM**  
**KRAK KRAK KRAK**  
**POW!**

WE'RE THE ONLY  
FORCE STANDIN'  
BETWEEN THEM  
AN' DOWNTOWN--

--WE  
GOT  
TO!



SAINTS--  
A LADY THAT  
GUTSY...

...SHE JUST  
HAS TA BE  
RESCUED!

WHASSA  
MATTA  
BOYS?

AIN'T  
NEVER BEEN  
HIT BY A  
SONIC BOOM  
BEFORE?

**BOOM**

YOU'VE HAD  
YOUR FUN,  
GENTS.

YOU  
WANT  
TO QUIT  
WHILE  
YOU'RE  
AHEAD...

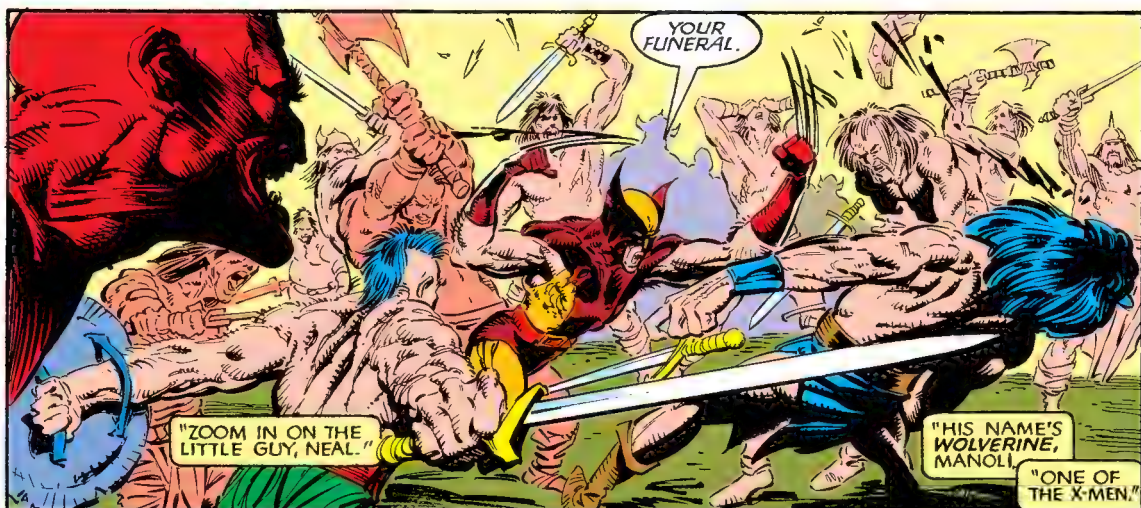


...OR PLAY  
ROUGH.

YOUR  
CHOICE.





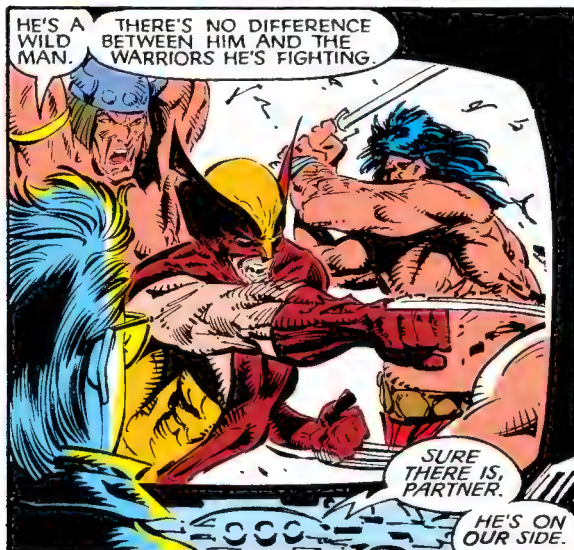


YOUR FUNERAL.

"ZOOM IN ON THE LITTLE GUY, NEAL."

"HIS NAME'S WOLVERINE, MANOLI."

"ONE OF THE X-MEN."



HE'S A WILD MAN.

THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE BETWEEN HIM AND THE WARRIORS HE'S FIGHTING.

SURE THERE IS, PARTNER.

HE'S ON OUR SIDE.



GREAT-- FOR AS LONG AS THAT LASTS.

SUPPOSE SOMEONE MAKES HIM A BETTER OFFER?

THESE SELF-PROCLAIMED SUPER HEROES PROTECT HUMANITY FROM "SUPER VILLAINS".

BUT, NEAL, WHO PROTECTS US FROM OUR HEROES?



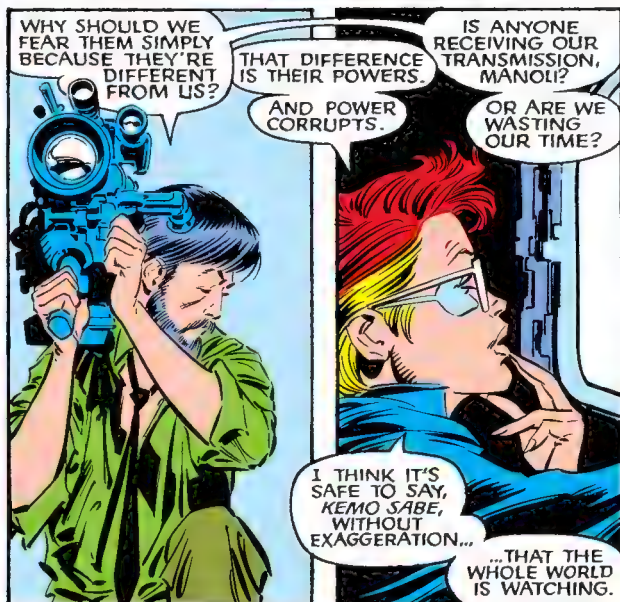
IS THAT A QUESTION TO ASK...

...WHEN HE'S BLEEDING INSTEAD OF US?

YOU REALLY BELIEVE IN THESE X-MEN, DON'T CHA, PAL?

IT'S THEIR WORLD, TOO.

THEY DESERVE AS MUCH FREEDOM AND HAPPINESS AS ANYONE ELSE.



WHY SHOULD WE FEAR THEM SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY'RE DIFFERENT FROM US?

THAT DIFFERENCE IS THEIR POWERS.

AND POWER CORRUPTS.

IS ANYONE RECEIVING OUR TRANSMISSION, MANOLI?

OR ARE WE WASTING OUR TIME?

I THINK IT'S SAFE TO SAY, KEMO SABE, WITHOUT EXAGGERATION...

...THAT THE WHOLE WORLD IS WATCHING.



ELSEWHERE--

--THE CONTINENTAL  
DIVIDE, NEAR WHAT  
IN OUR WORLD WOULD  
BE THE VALLEY OF  
THE YELLOWSTONE,  
WYOMING...

FORGE--

--YOUR  
MOUNTAIN OF  
POWER--

--DESTROYED!

I SUSPECTED  
AS MUCH.

BUT I HAD  
TO SEE FOR  
MYSELF.

THE ADVERSARY'S  
VERY THOROUGH,  
VERY CAREFUL.

PROBABLY  
THE SAME  
ON ALL THE  
EARTHS  
THERE ARE

FORGIVE  
ME, LITTLE  
FLOWER...

... BUT I  
HAVE TO BE  
CERTAIN.

SEE? THE POWER OF THIS NEXUS  
STILL EXISTS-- BUT IT'S BEEN  
TAINTED, TWISTED INTO A FORCE  
INIMICAL TO LIFE. ANYONE WHO  
TRIES TO DRAW ON IT,  
ENDS UP THE SAME.

THE ADVERSARY  
KNOWS I'M  
CRIPPLED-- THAT  
THERE MOST LIKELY  
ISN'T A BLESSED  
THING I CAN DO  
TO HIM-- BUT HE  
ISN'T ABOUT TO  
TAKE THE RISK.

HE WANTS US  
IN THE GAME--  
THAT'S WHY WE'RE  
STILL ALIVE-- BUT  
ON HIS TERMS, AS  
HIS PAWNS.

WAS NAZE  
SUCH A PAWN?  
WAS THAT WHY  
HE BETRAYED  
YOU THROUGH  
ME?

I'LL LAY ODDS THE  
NAZE I KNEW-- MY  
FATHER-FRIEND, MY  
TEACHER-- NO  
LONGER EXISTS,  
PROBABLY HASN'T  
FOR QUITE A  
WHILE.

AT BEST, HE'S BEEN  
POSSESSED BY THE  
ADVERSARY.

AT WORST, HE'S  
THE CHAOS-LORD'S  
HUMAN AVATAR.

A GOD  
MADE  
FLESH.

AND WHAT  
DOES THAT  
MEAN?

DEPENDS.

FORGE, I  
AM IN NO  
MOOD FOR  
GAMES!





THAT'S JUST THE POINT--

--TO THE ADVERSARY. ALL THIS IS NO MORE THAN A GAME, THE GREATEST EVER PLAYED.

THAT'S WHY HE LOVES CHAOS-- UPSETS THE RULES, MAKES THE GAME MORE CHALLENGING, THE VICTORY... I SUPPOSE... MORE SWEET.



AND-- WHAT OF THOSE SACRIFICED ALONG THE WAY?

DOES A CHILD CARE ABOUT HIS TOYS?

THAT IS **OBSCENE!**



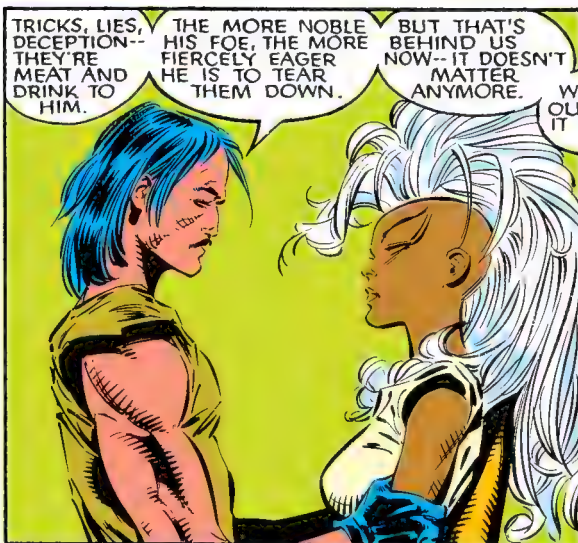
PERHAPS. BUT THERE'S NO DENYING HIS POWER.

FOR ALL YOUR STRENGTH, STORM--

--OF WILL, OF PURPOSE, EVEN OF FAITH--

--HE GOT TO YOU.

HE MADE YOU DO HIS BIDDING.



TRICKS, LIES, DECEPTION-- THEY'RE MEAT AND DRINK TO HIM.

THE MORE NOBLE HIS FOE, THE MORE FIERCELY EAGER HE IS TO TEAR THEM DOWN.

BUT THAT'S BEHIND US NOW-- IT DOESN'T MATTER ANYMORE.

WE'RE OUT OF IT HERE.



WHATEVER HAPPENS ON THAT OTHER EARTH, WE'RE SAFE.

WE'RE TOGETHER.

WE CAN BEGIN AGAIN.

THAT "OTHER EARTH" IS HOME!

HOME IS WHERE YOUR HEART IS.

MINE'S WITH YOU.

WHERE'S YOURS?

I...

...CANNOT SAY.



YOU TALK SO SWEETLY--

--BUT SO DID NAZE...

...AND WITH MUCH THE SAME WORDS.

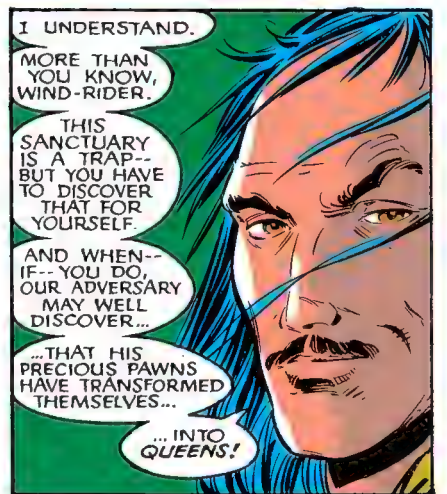
YOU ASK FOR A TRUST I WILL NOT GIVE.

I HAVE PATHS YET TO WALK, FORGE.

ANSWERS TO FIND. ABOUT THIS WORLD. ABOUT MYSELF.

IT IS A QUEST I MUST UNDER-TAKE...

...ALONE.



I UNDERSTAND.

MORE THAN YOU KNOW, WIND-RIDER.

THIS SANCTUARY IS A TRAP-- BUT YOU HAVE TO DISCOVER THAT FOR YOURSELF.

AND WHEN-- IF-- YOU DO, OUR ADVERSARY MAY WELL DISCOVER...

...THAT HIS PRECIOUS PAWNS HAVE TRANSFORMED THEMSELVES...

...INTO **QUEENS!**

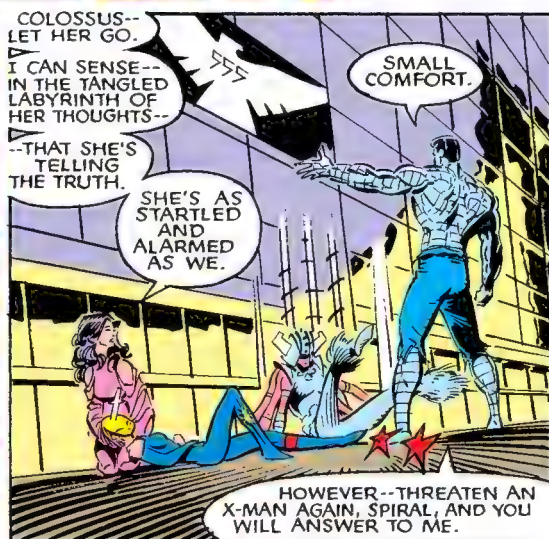
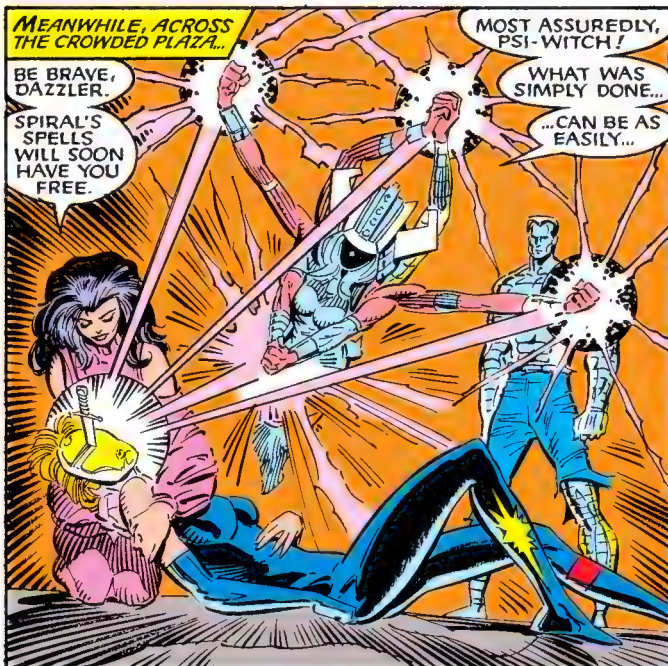


YOU WERE  
SAYING,  
MA'AM?

BUT WE'VE BEEN GOOD GUYS-- WHAT YOU MEDIA TYPES DUB "SUPER HEROES" FROM DAY ONE!

**THAT'S  
TELLING  
THE  
WORLD!**







ELSEWHERE--

--THE AFRICA OF THIS OTHER EARTH...

--ON THE GREAT EASTERN PLAIN WHERE MANY, ON OUR WORLD, THEORIZE HUMAN LIFE BEGAN.

THIS WAS MY HOME--

--THE HOME OF MY ANCESTORS FROM THE DAWN OF MEMORY.

IT WAS HERE I WAS DRAWN, WHEN MY MUTANT POWERS FIRST MANIFESTED THEMSELVES.

HERE, I SET ASIDE MY HUMANITY AND TOOK ON THE MANTLE OF A GODDESS.

THAT SPECIAL RESONANCE--THE JOY I FELT WHENEVER MY FEET TROD THIS GROUND-- NEVER LEFT MY SOUL.

UNTIL NOW. I FEEL NOTHING.

IS THE FAULT MINE-- OR SOMETHING ELSE?

GREAT MOTHER--

--BRIGHT LADY OF THE EARTH AND AIR--

--HEAR THY DAUGHTER'S CALL!

DIFFERENT TIME, PULLED FROM THE VAULT OF MEMORY.

A YOUNG AND INNOCENT ORORO, CRYING OUT WITH ALL HER HEART...

AWED BY WHAT DOES.

...UNSURE OF WHAT-- IF ANYTHING-- WILL ANSWER.

BUT HERE, NOW, THE ADULT BEHOLDS...

NOTHING!

THIS WORLD HAS NO SOUL!

ALL THE ELEMENTS ARE IN PLACE-- BUT THEY ARE FORM WITHOUT FULL SUBSTANCE, AS IF THE WORLD ITSELF HAS YET TO BE TRULY BORN.

IT LACKS CONSECRATION-- A GIFT OF THE SPIRIT TO BRING IT TO LIFE.

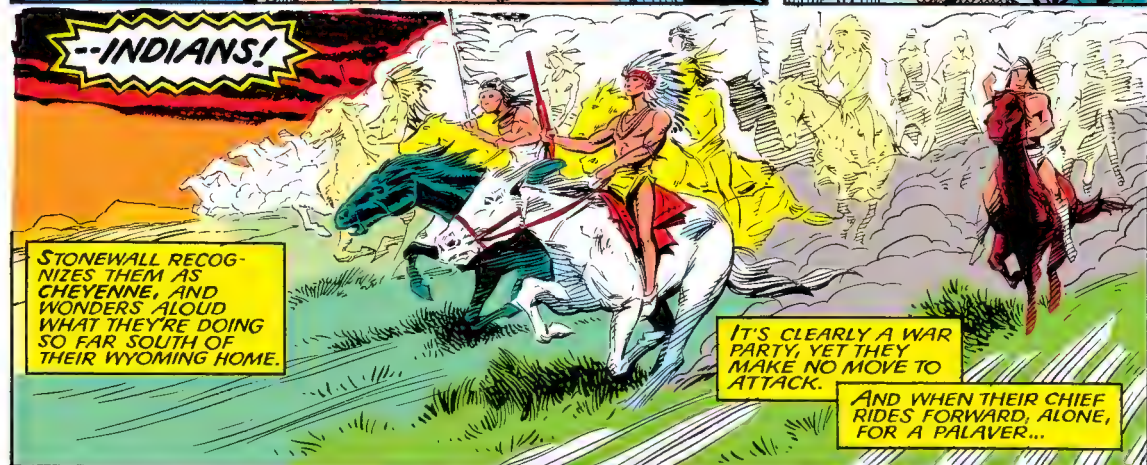
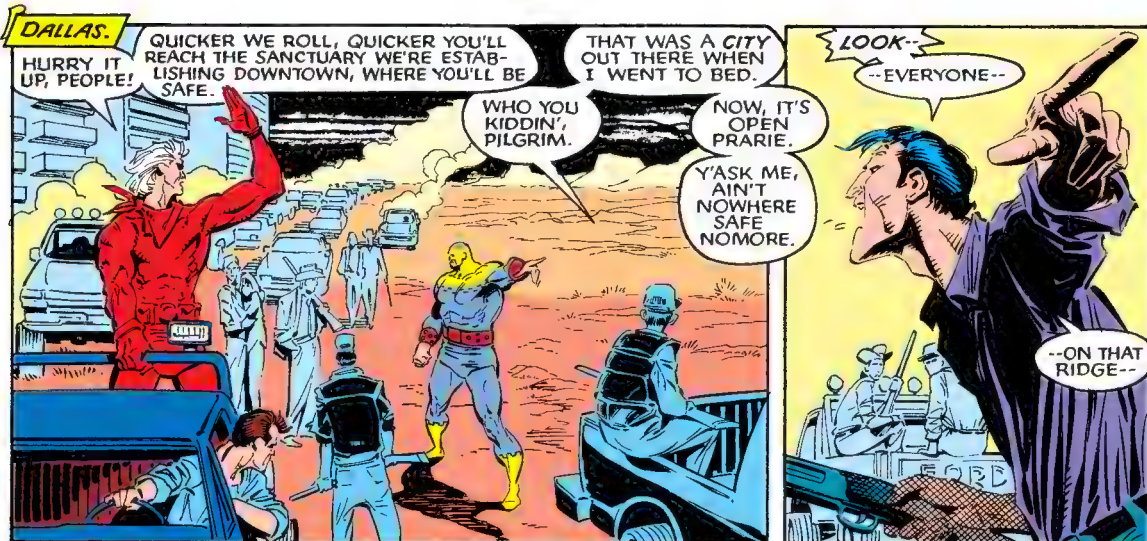
IS THAT WHY FORGE AND I ARE HERE, TO PROVIDE IT?

IS THAT THE REASON THERE IS NO BRIGHT LADY TO HEAR MY PRAYERS--

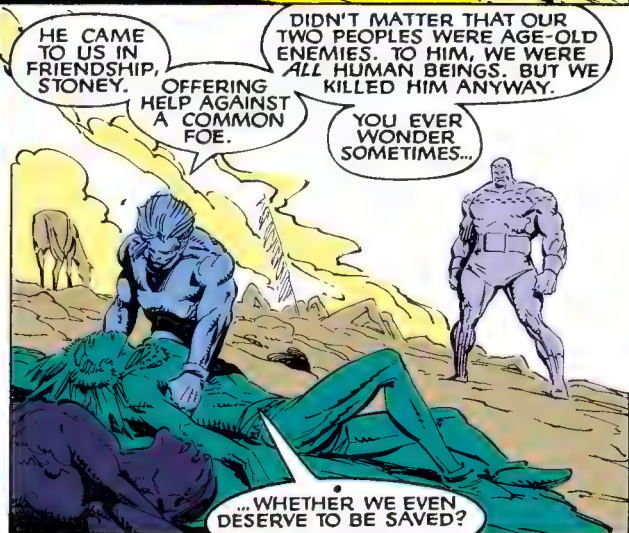
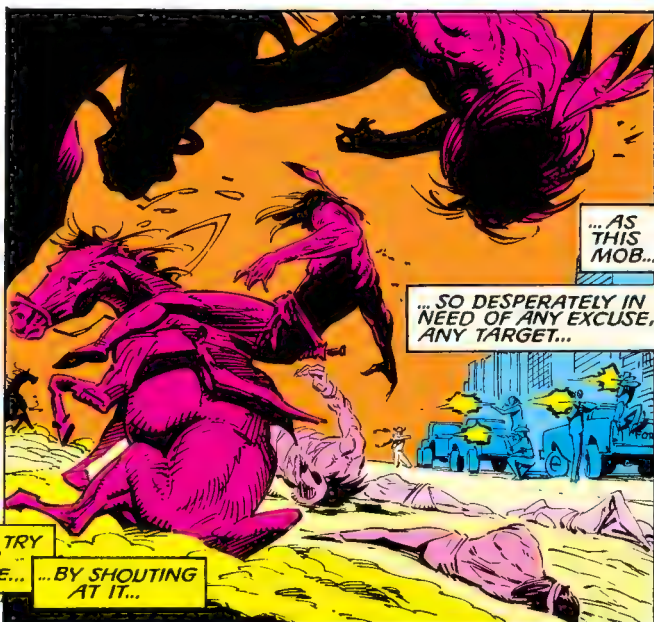
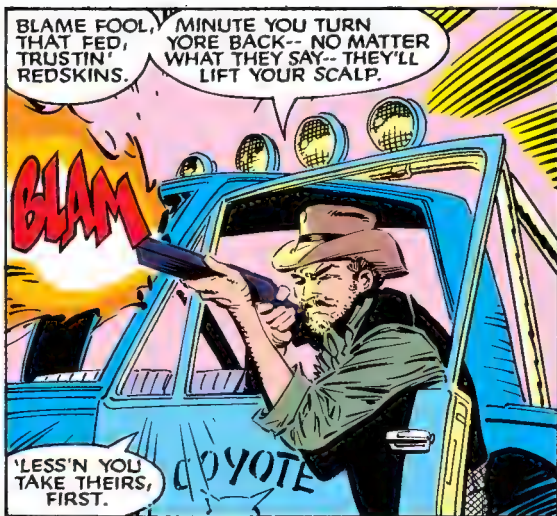
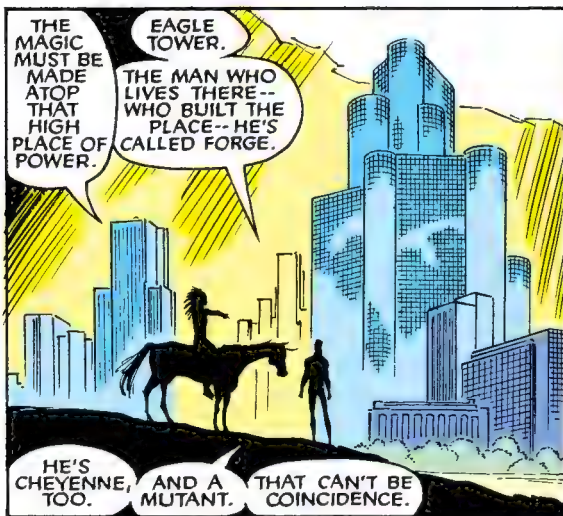
--BECAUSE, IN THIS PLACE...

...I AM MEANT TO BE SHE?!!

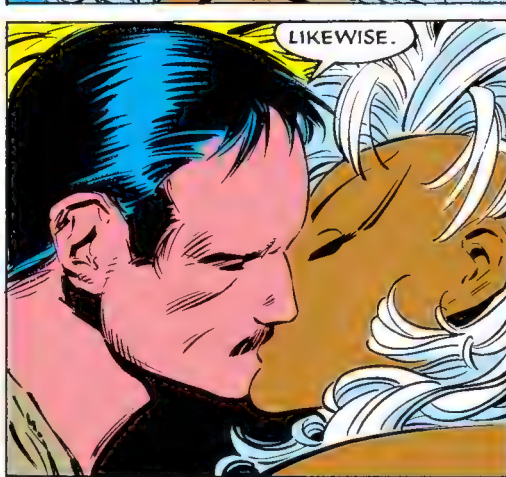
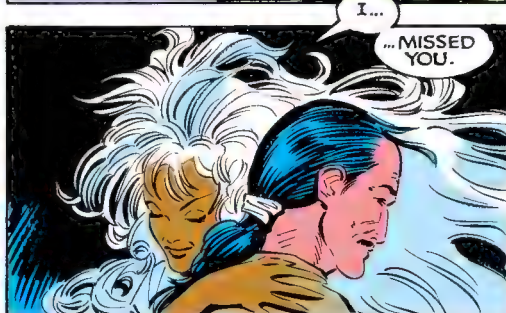
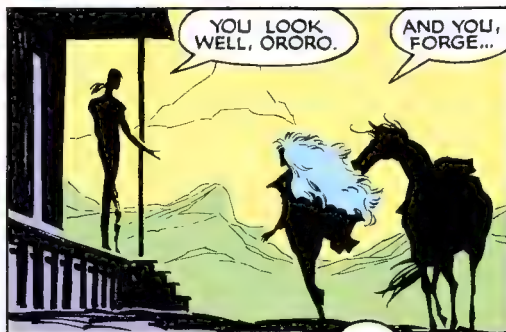
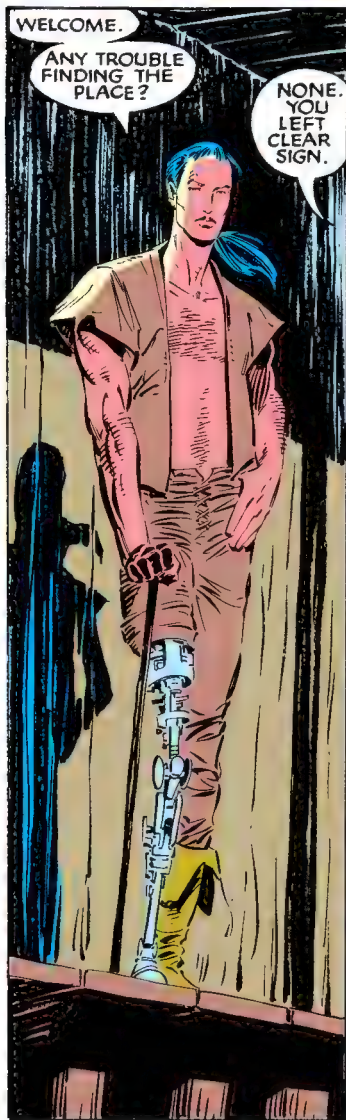
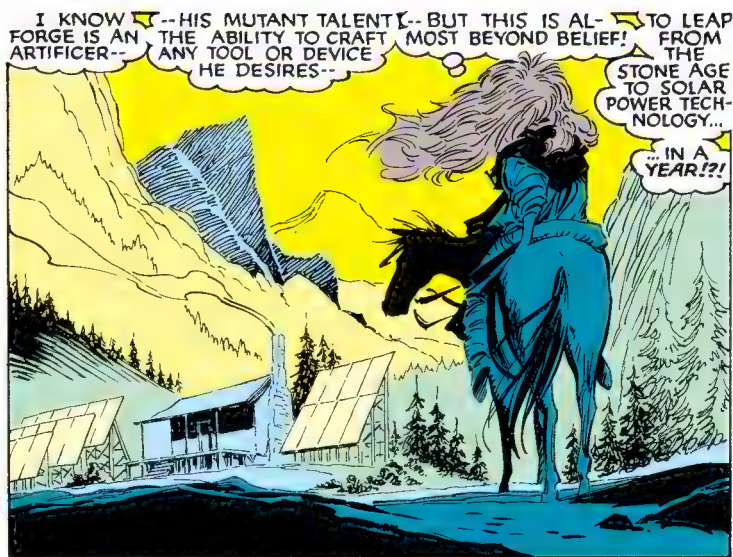
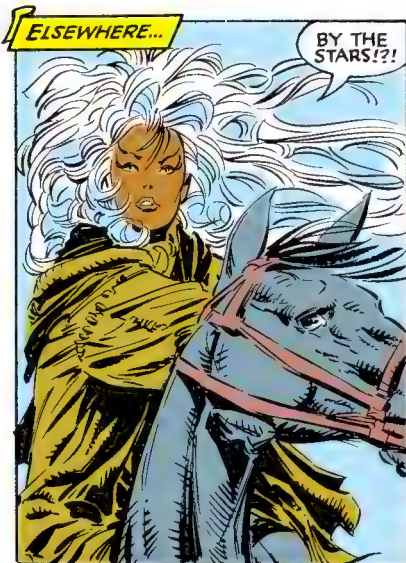














DALLAS.

MAKE EVERY SHOT COUNT, Y'ALL!

AMMO WON'T LAST FOREVER.

AN' WHEN IT RUNS OUT, WHAT THEN?!

WE'RE A HANDFUL O' SUPER-BEINGS...

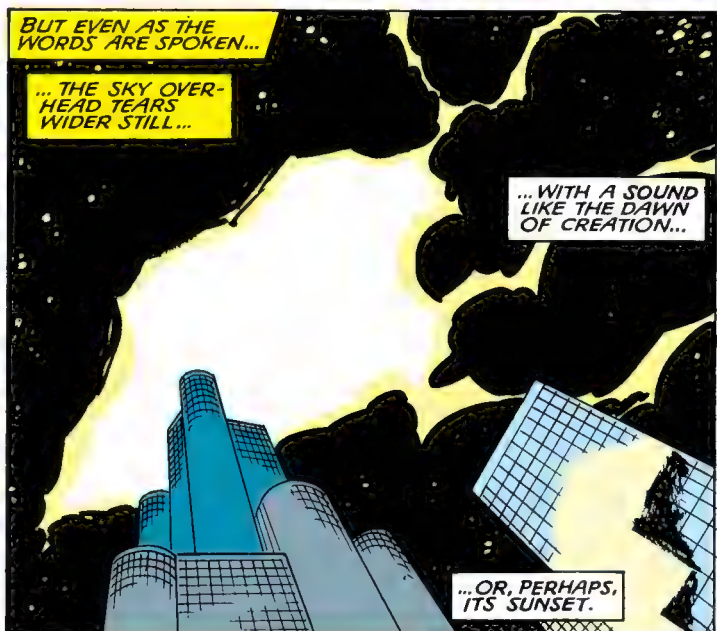
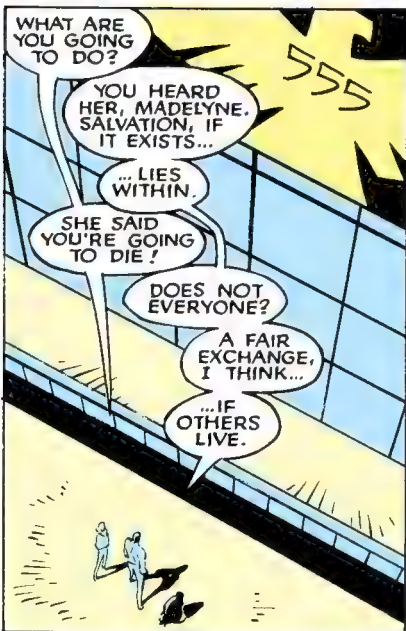
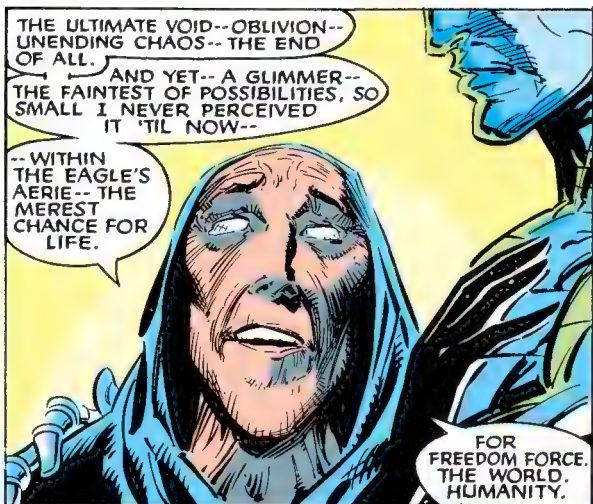
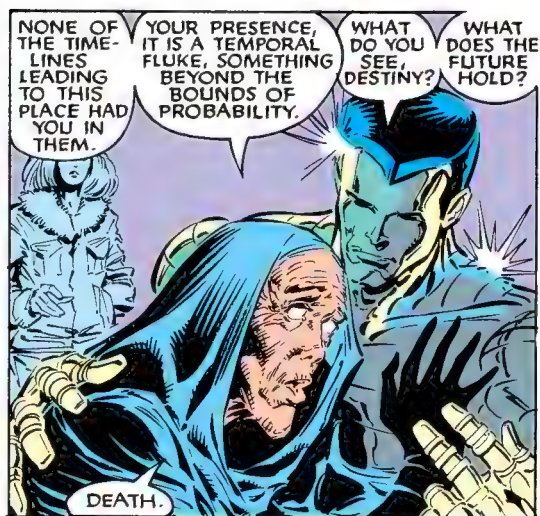
...HOW DO WE HOLD OFF THE END O' THE WORLD?!!

...BUYIN' OUR FELLOW GREEKS TIME TO RAISE PROPER DEFENSES AN' MASS THEIR ARMIES.

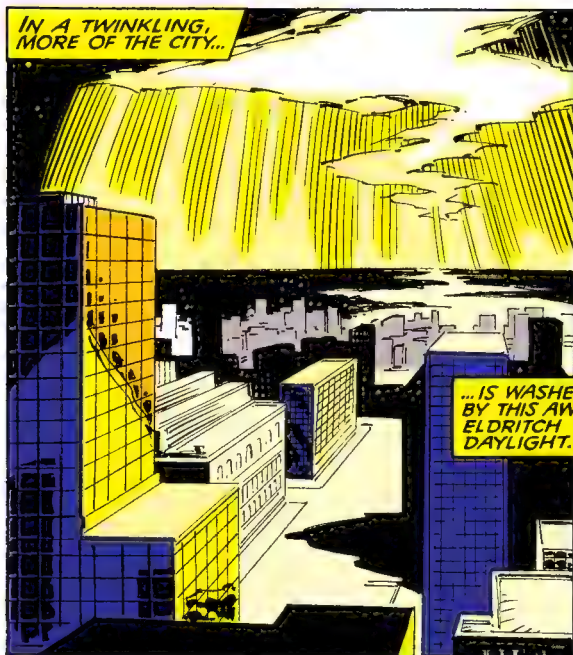
...HOLDIN' THE LINE AT THERMOPYLAE AGAINST IMPOSSIBLE ODDS...

HERE WE REMAIN OBEDIENT TO THEIR WILL, EVEN UNTO DEATH.



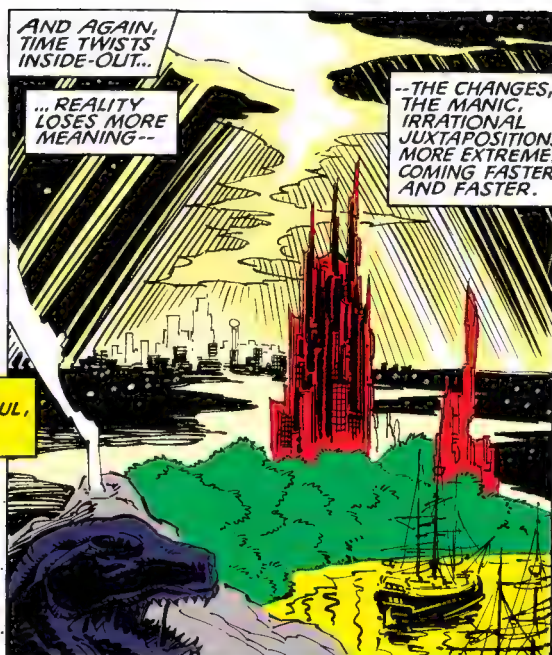






IN A TWINKLING,  
MORE OF THE CITY...

...IS WASHED  
BY THIS AWFUL,  
ELDRITCH  
DAYLIGHT.



AND AGAIN,  
TIME TWISTS  
INSIDE-OUT...

... REALITY  
LOSES MORE  
MEANING--

--THE CHANGES,  
THE MANIC,  
IRRATIONAL  
JUXTAPOSITIONS,  
MORE EXTREME,  
COMING FASTER  
AND FASTER.



WHILE,  
IN THE  
EYE OF THIS  
TEMPEST...

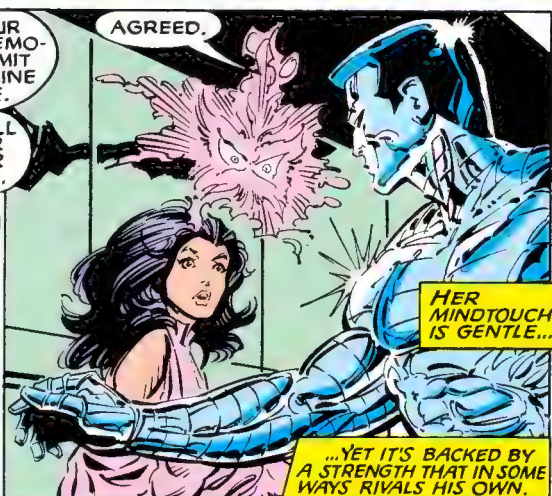
COLOSSUS,  
I CAUGHT  
A FLASH  
OF YOUR  
THOUGHTS--!

I HAVE  
NOT THE  
TIME TO  
EXPLAIN,  
PSYLOCKE,  
NOR THE  
WORDS.

LET ME SCAN YOUR  
THOUGHTS AND MEMO-  
RIES, AND TRANSMIT  
THEM TO WOLVERINE  
AND MYSTIQUE.

THIS MAY WELL  
BE A TIME FOR  
HEROICS, PIOTR  
NIKOLIEVITCH...

...BUT NOT  
STUPID  
ONES.



AGREED.

HER  
MINDTOUCH  
IS GENTLE...

...YET IT'S BACKED BY  
A STRENGTH THAT IN SOME  
WAYS RIVALS HIS OWN.



IMAGES  
SCATTER-  
SHOT  
ACROSS  
HIS  
AWARE-  
NESS--

--THE MOST TERRIBLE  
OF BATTLES...

...AGAINST  
THE MOST  
FEARSOME  
OF FOES...

...AND, DOMINATING  
EVERY SCENE...

...THE HAUNTING,  
DUAL-FEATURED  
FACE...

...OF THE WOMAN  
WHO SENT HIM HERE.



ROMA!?!)

YOU-- KNOW HER?!

SHE'S THE  
GUARDIAN OF  
THE OMNIVERSE,  
SUPREME CARE-  
TAKER AND  
ARBITER OF  
REALITY.

WELL, REALITY  
FOR US HAS  
CLEARLY GONE  
MAD. IF ROMA IS  
ITS CARETAKER,  
THEN SHE IS  
EITHER THE CAUSE  
OR ANOTHER  
VICTIM.

COLOSSUS,  
SHE'S A GODDESS.  
SO WHAT IF SHE  
CONTACTED YOU,  
HOW DO WE  
REACH HER?

EVER SINCE I ARRIVED HERE, I HAVE  
BEEN DRAWN TO FORGE'S AERIE. PERHAPS  
THAT IS WHERE OUR ANSWERS ARE  
TO BE FOUND?

BOY MAKES  
SENSE. ROGUE,  
RECONNOITER  
FORGE'S PENT-  
HOUSE.

SPIRAL,  
GET  
THERE  
FIRST.

DARN! MYSTIQUE MAY  
BE MY FOSTER  
MOM...

BUT THAT  
DOESN'T  
MEAN...

... SHE  
CUTS  
ME ANY  
SLACK.

Whoa-  
oh!  
ON  
T'OTHER  
HAND...

... MAYBE  
IT AIN'T  
SO BAD A  
THING...

... ARRIVIN'  
IN SECOND  
PLACE.

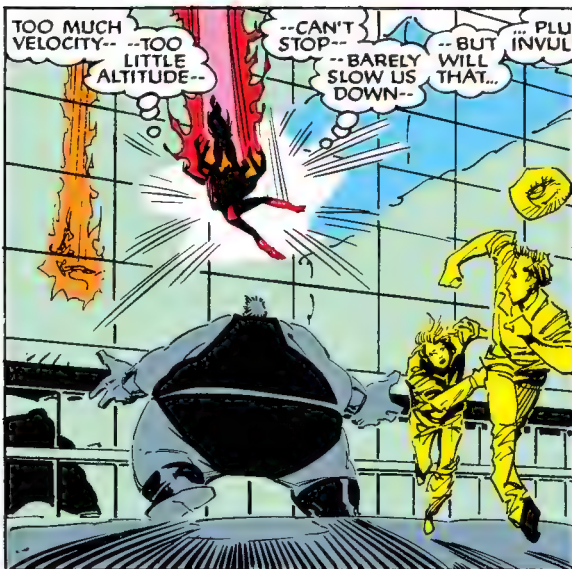
SPIRAL'S  
COMIN'  
DOWN LIKE  
A RUNAWAY  
ROCKET!

AH  
HATE HER  
GUTS--

--SHE DON'T  
DESERVE  
MY BEIN'  
SO NICE...

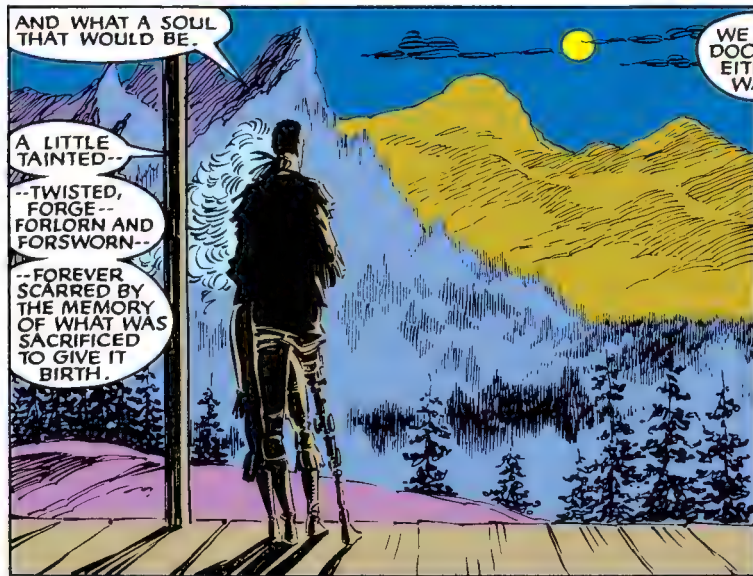
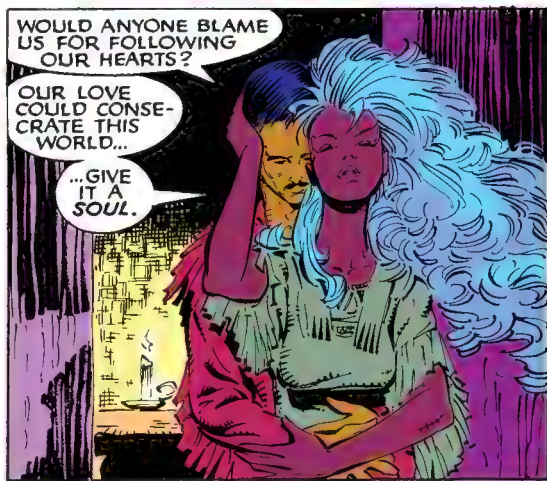
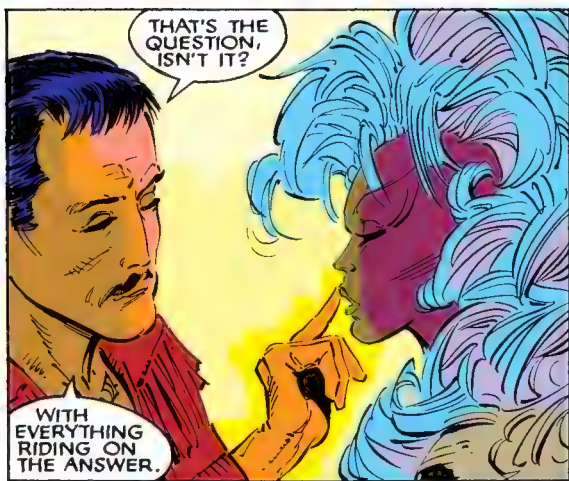
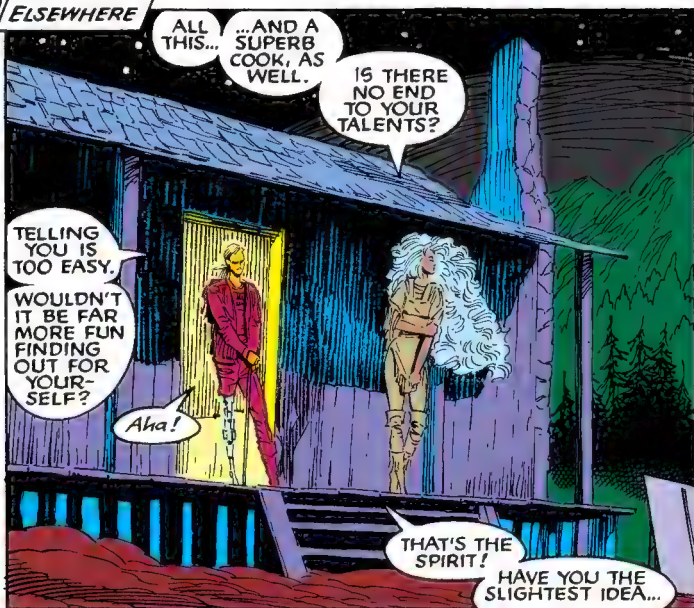
... PROBL'Y  
LET ME  
SPLATTER  
WITHOUT A  
QUALM-- --BUT AH  
CAN'T!



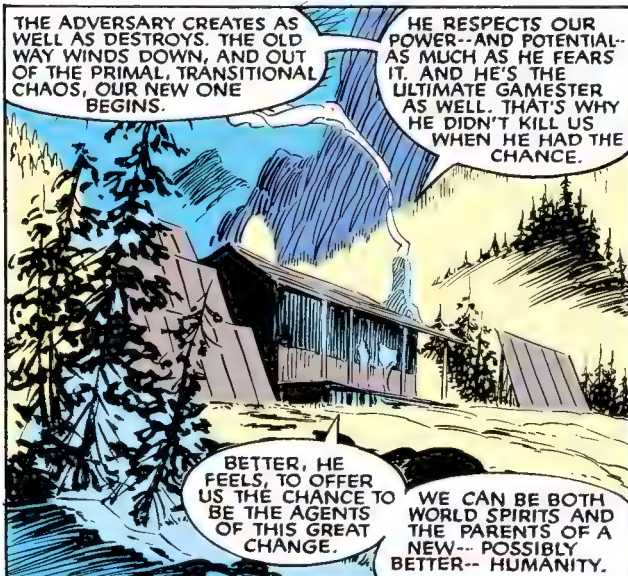




ELSEWHERE







THE ADVERSARY CREATES AS WELL AS DESTROYS. THE OLD WAY WINDS DOWN, AND OUT OF THE PRIMAL, TRANSITIONAL CHAOS, OUR NEW ONE BEGINS.

HE RESPECTS OUR POWER--AND POTENTIAL--AS MUCH AS HE FEARS IT. AND HE'S THE ULTIMATE GAMESTER AS WELL. THAT'S WHY HE DIDN'T KILL US WHEN HE HAD THE CHANCE.

BETTER, HE FEELS, TO OFFER US THE CHANCE TO BE THE AGENTS OF THIS GREAT CHANGE.

WE CAN BE BOTH WORLD SPIRITS AND THE PARENTS OF A NEW-- POSSIBLY BETTER-- HUMANITY.



WE GO BACK.

ASSUMING WE'RE BRAVE AND INVENTIVE-- AND MAYBE FOOLISH-- ENOUGH.

BUT IF WE DO, ALL BETS ARE OFF. WE BECOME PART OF THAT EARTH'S FATE. IT DIES, WE DIE. NO NEW BEGINNING, NO SECOND CHANCE-- FOR US OR THE WORLD OR HUMANITY. FINITO, SWEETHEART.



IS THIS FORGE WHO SPEAKS--

--OR THE ADVERSARY, THROUGH HIM?

DO I BELIEVE WORDS, OR HEART--

--WHEN BOTH HAVE LIED??

AND THE ALTERNATIVE?



OF COURSE, WE MIGHT ALWAYS WIN-- BUT I WOULDN'T BET THOSE ODDS.

YOU SPEAK AS THOUGH WE HAVE A WAY HOME.



WHAT D'YOU THINK I'VE BEEN WORKING TOWARDS WHILE YOU'VE BEEN ROAMING THE GLOBE?

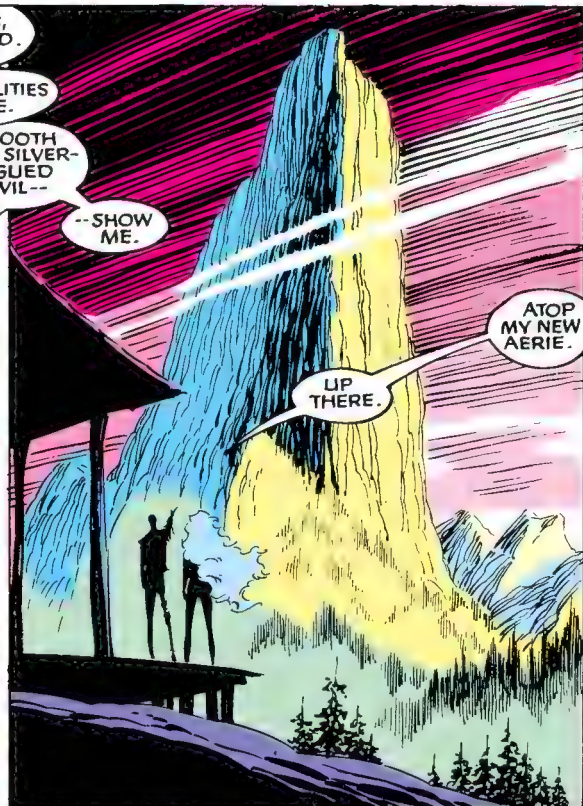


I'M THE MAKER, ORORO-- BUT YOU'RE THE LIFE-FORCE THAT GIVES ME PURPOSE. THAT ENABLES ME TO BEST USE THE TOOLS I BUILD.

BY OURSELVES, WE'RE CRIPPLED. TOGETHER--

--THE POSSIBILITIES ARE INFINITE.

SMOOTH AND SILVER-TONGUED DEVIL--



--SHOW ME.

UP THERE.

ATOP MY NEW AERIE.



**DALLAS**

...WAS TRYIN' TO WRITE ABOUT IN HIS LETTERS.

SO THIS IS WHAT MY BOY...

EVEN AT NIGHT, GODFORSAKEN PLACE IS HOT AS A STEAMBATH.

WHAT DID YOU MEAN, NOT AN ACCIDENT?

FORGE LOST HIS HAND AN' LEG IN THE 'NAM.

AN' WAY I HEAR TELL...

...IT'S WHERE HE RENOUNCED HIS MAGIC--!

COMRADES-- BEWARE!

**BUPPA BUPPA**

SNIPER! HIT THE DECK! VIET CONG!

STINKING MASK! CAN'T SEE. HAVE TO AIM MY LASER SHOT BY THE SOUND OF GUN-FIRE, HOPE FOR THE BEST.

WISH SPIRAL-- ROT HER STINKING SOUL-- WAS THE TARGET!

**Vorp!**

MISSED, LADY! LUCKY FER YOU...

... I WON'T.

**BOOM!**

FAIR SHOOTIN'. DID THE JOB.

DON'T MUCH LIKE "CHARLEY" HERE.

DON'T LIKE YOU MUTIES, EITHER.

HIS EYES-- --HIS SCENT--

--THIS "GOOD OL' BOY" ISN'T WHAT HE SEEMS.

BUT THEN-- 'ROUND THIS MADHOUSE-- WHAT IS?

TROOPER WASN'T ALONE. LOTS MORE CONG-- SCENTS ARE HEAVY, THEY'RE CLOSE BY.

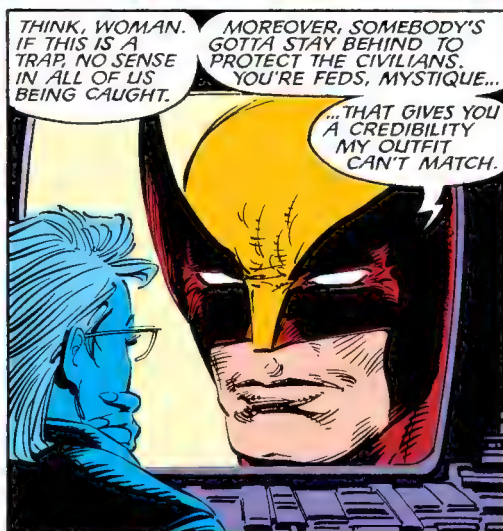
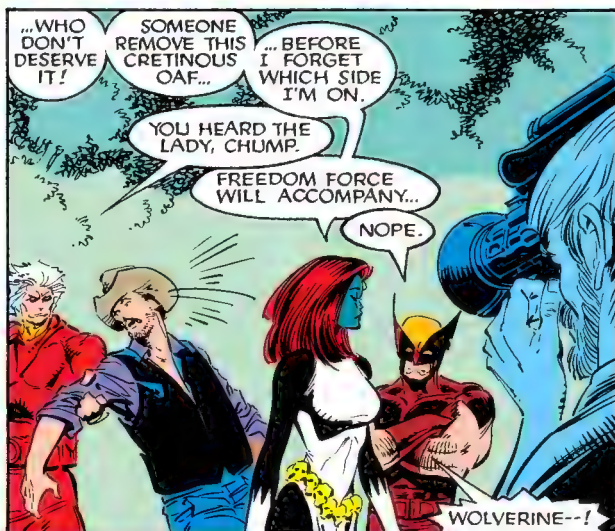
AMERICANS, TOO.

PROBABLY BE A ROYAL FIREFIGHT BEFORE LONG. WOULDN'T DO TO BE CAUGHT IN THE MIDDLE.

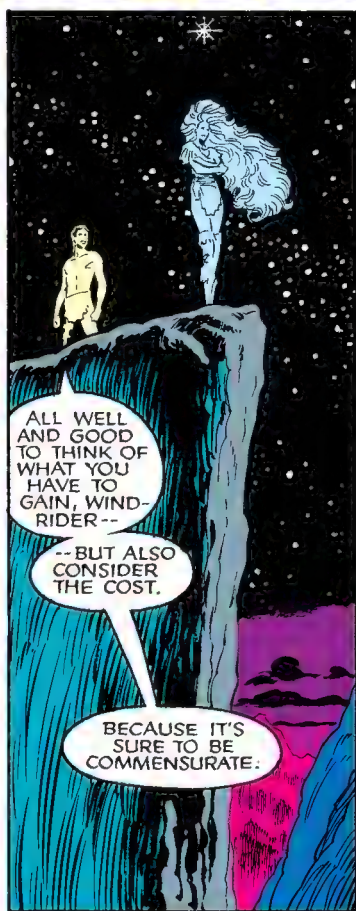
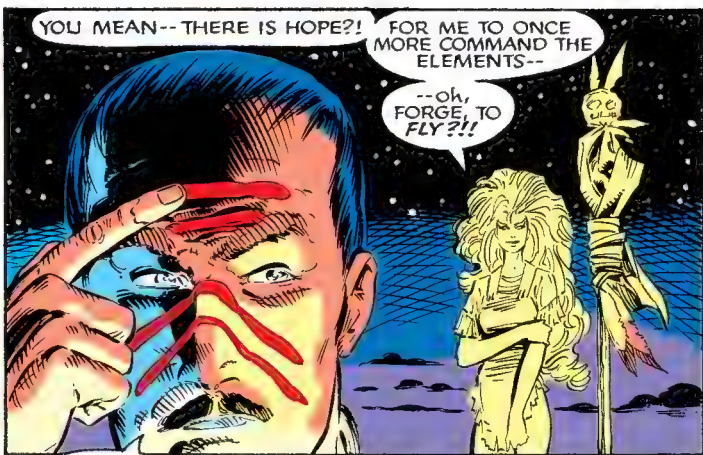
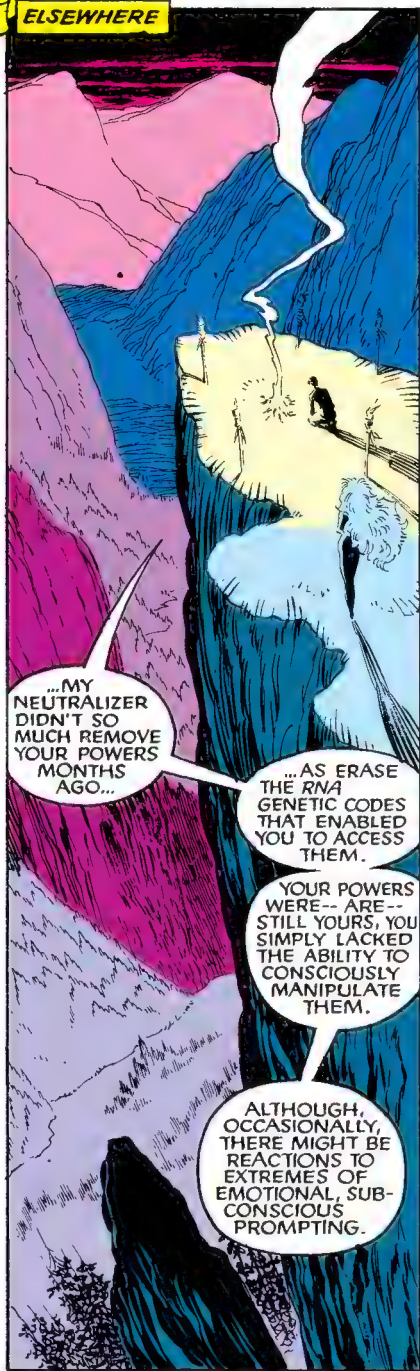
WOLVERINE! I'VE SPOTTED ROMA'S THOUGHT-TRACES!

SHE'S PRESENT IN THIS REALITY-MODE-- AND I BELIEVE I CAN PIN-POINT HER POSITION!

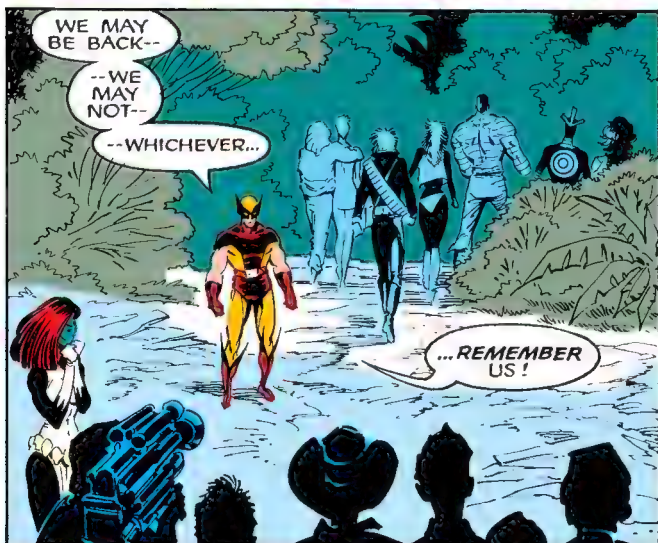
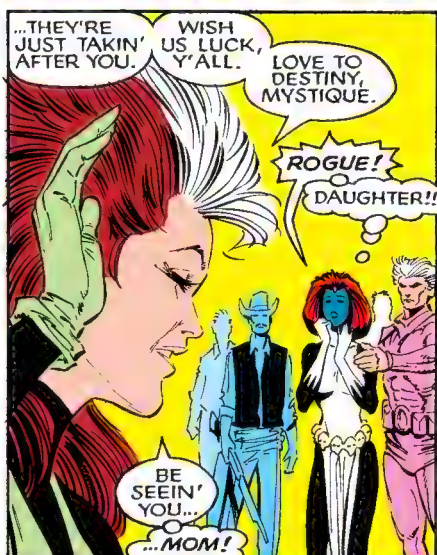
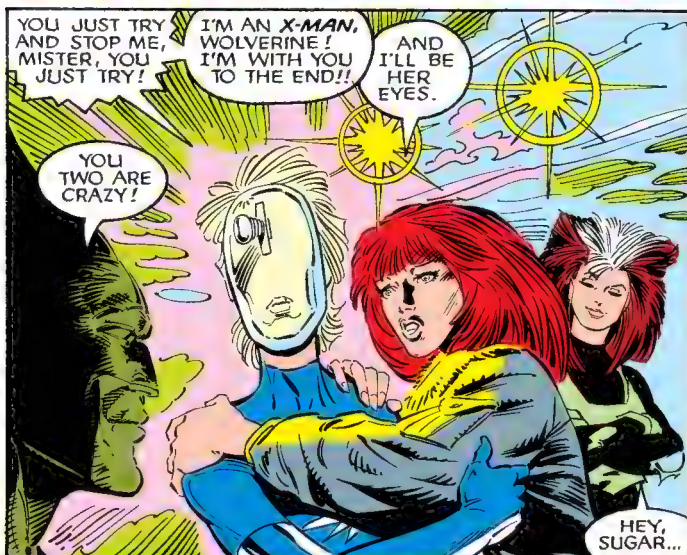




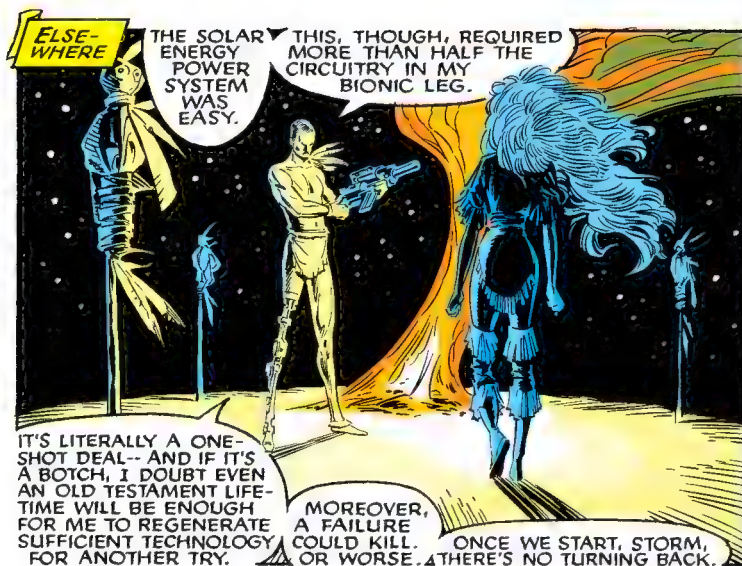












ELSE-WHERE

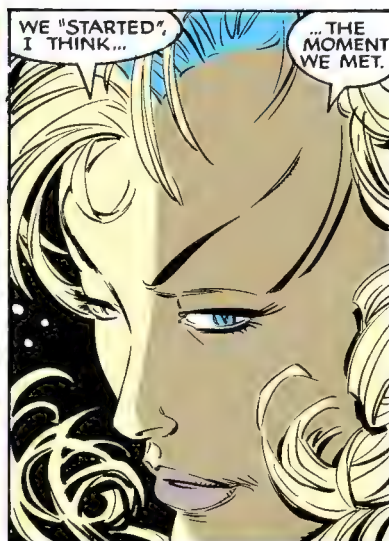
THE SOLAR ENERGY POWER SYSTEM WAS EASY.

THIS, THOUGH, REQUIRED MORE THAN HALF THE CIRCUITRY IN MY BIONIC LEG.

IT'S LITERALLY A ONE-SHOT DEAL-- AND IF IT'S A BOTCH, I DOUBT EVEN AN OLD TESTAMENT LIFE-TIME WILL BE ENOUGH FOR ME TO REGENERATE SUFFICIENT TECHNOLOGY FOR ANOTHER TRY.

MOREOVER, A FAILURE COULD KILL.

ONCE WE START, STORM, THERE'S NO TURNING BACK.



WE "STARTED", I THINK...

...THE MOMENT WE MET.



I DON'T WANT TO DO THIS.

I LOVE YOU, ORORO. I WANT TO CARRY YOU BACK TO THE HOUSE, TAKE YOU TO BED, I WANT US TO HAVE THE HAPPINESS WE'VE BOTH EARNED.



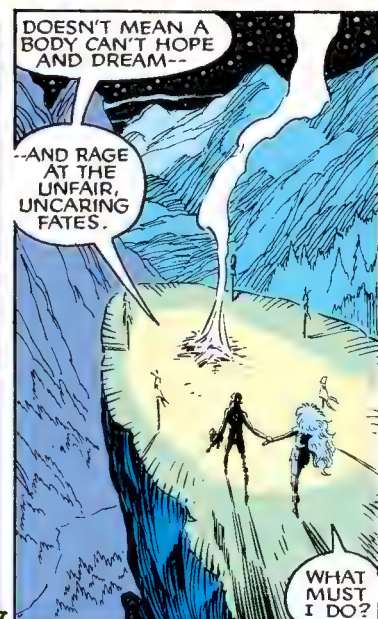
THE FUTURE AND FAMILY WE DESERVE.

NO LESS THAN I, MY BRAVE.

BUT THEN, YOU WOULD NOT BE WORTHY OF THE ADVERSARY'S RESPECT...

...NOR I OF YOUR HEART.

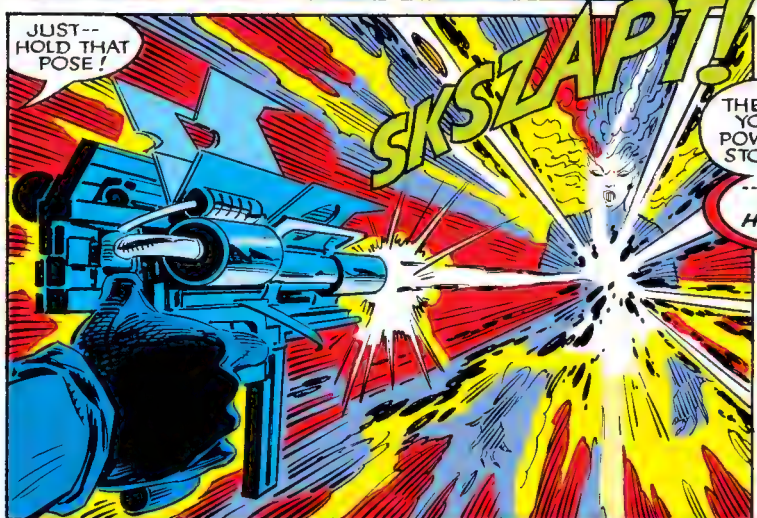
WE ARE BOUND, FORGE, BY WHAT WE ARE.



DOESN'T MEAN A BODY CAN'T HOPE AND DREAM--

--AND RAGE AT THE UNFAIR, UNCARING FATES.

WHAT MUST I DO?



JUST-- HOLD THAT POSE!

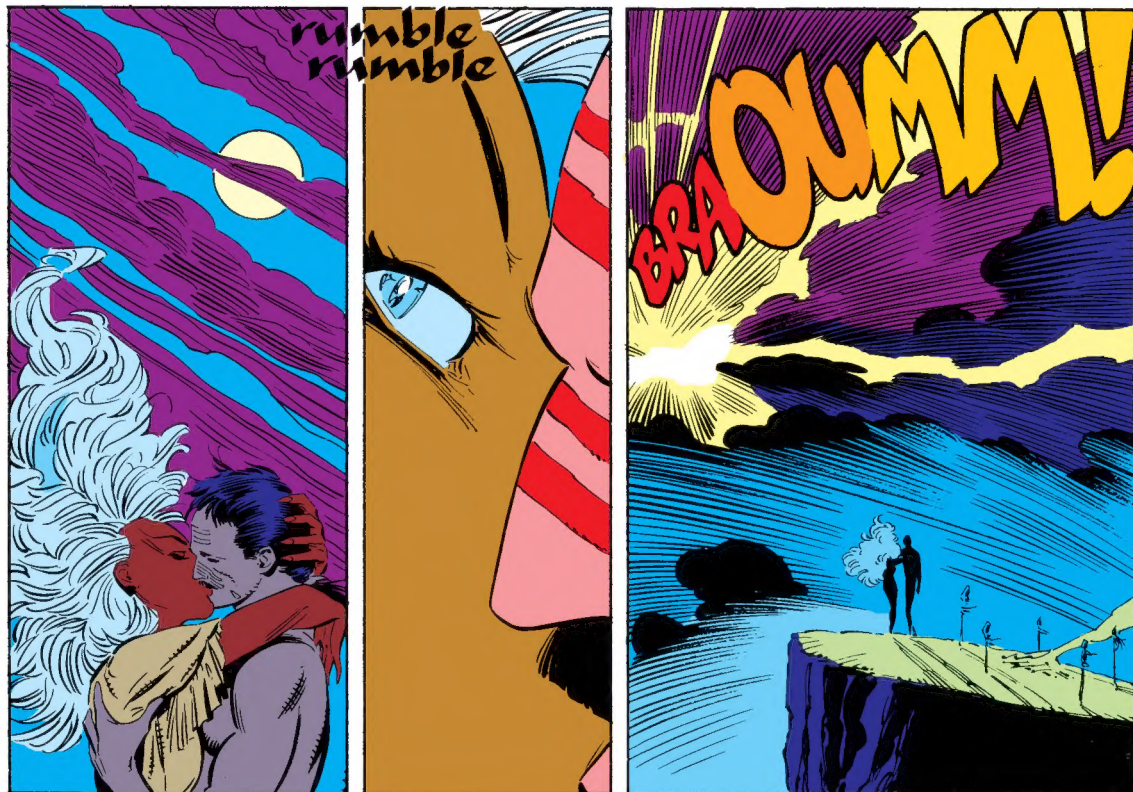
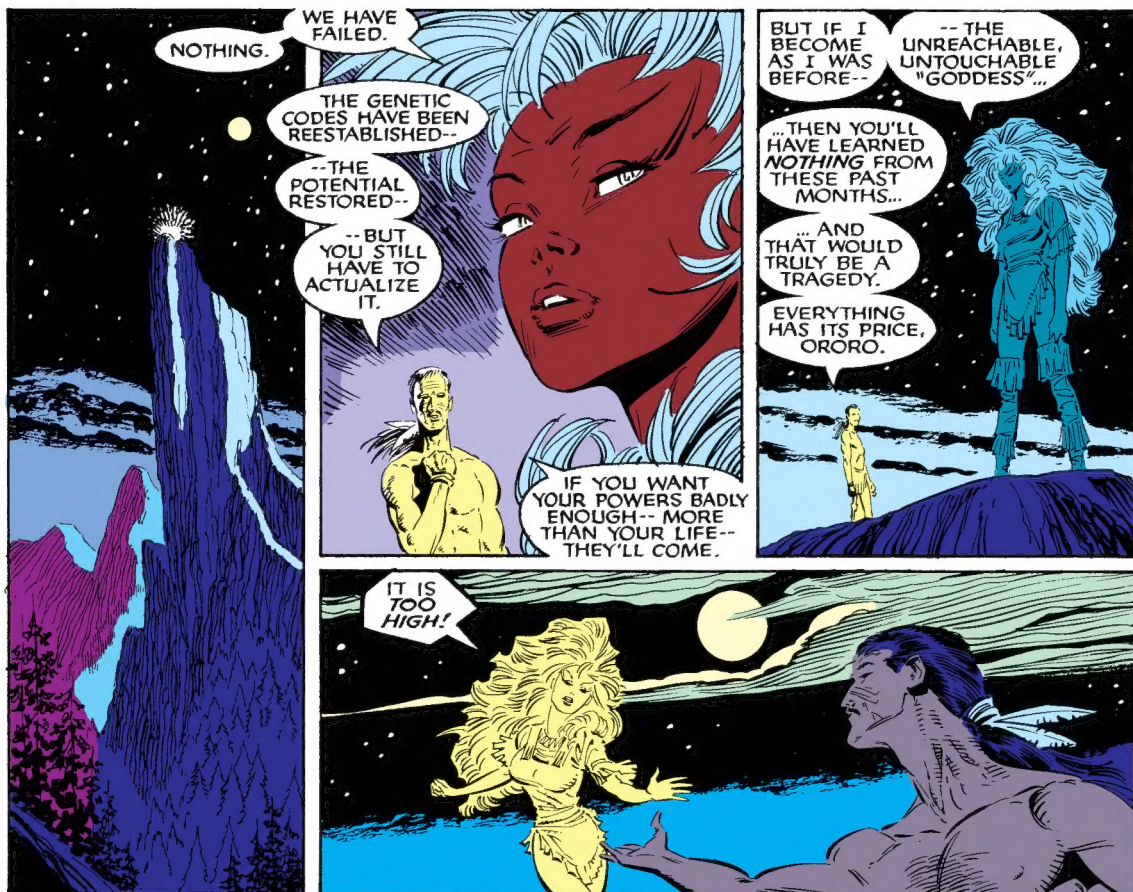
SKSZAPT!



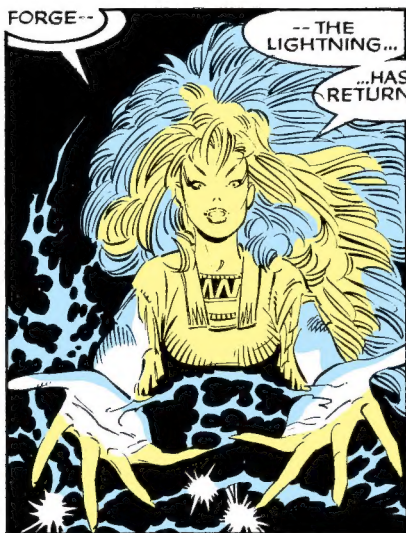
THEY'RE YOUR POWERS, STORM--

--CALL 'EM HOME!



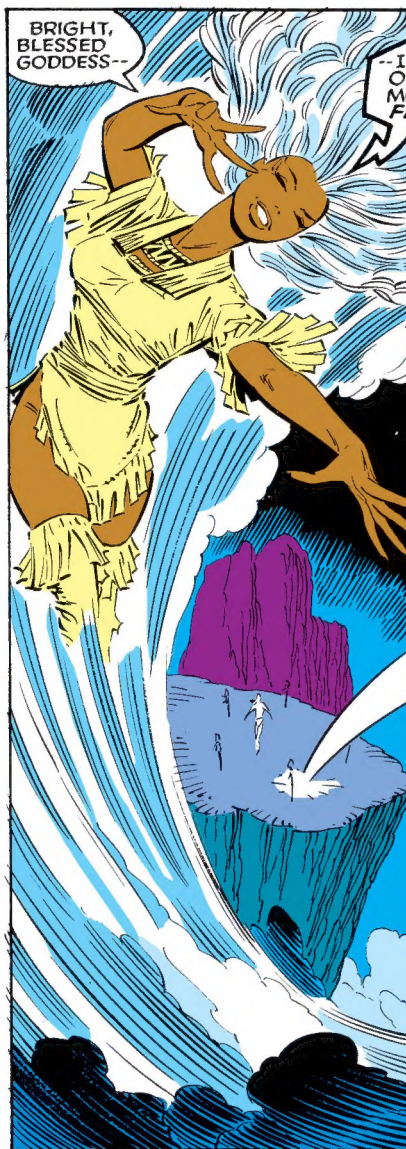






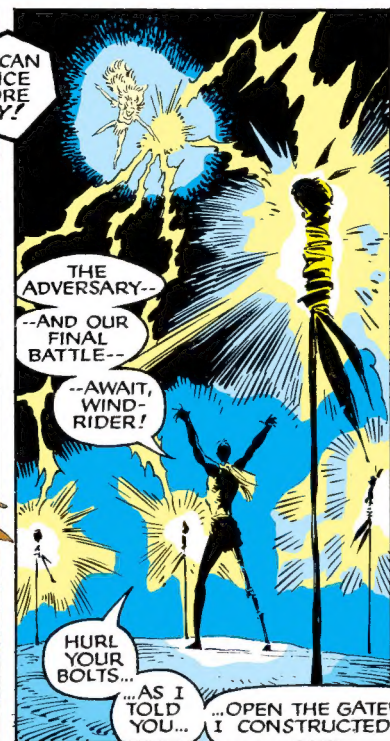
-- THE  
LIGHTNING...

...HAS  
RETURNED!



BRIGHT,  
BLESSED  
GODDESS--

--I CAN  
ONCE  
MORE  
FLY!



THE  
ADVERSARY--

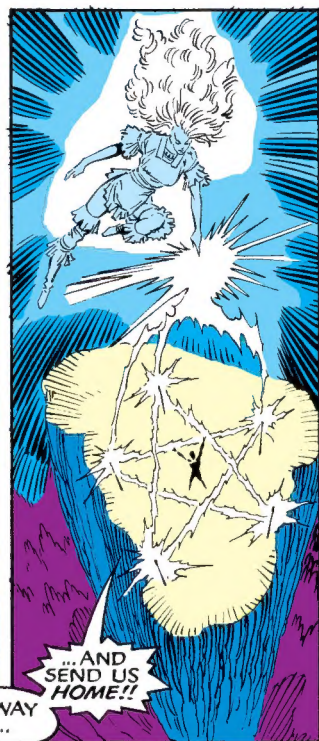
--AND OUR  
FINAL  
BATTLE--

--AWAIT,  
WIND-  
RIDER!

HURL  
YOUR  
BOLTS...

...AS I  
TOLD  
YOU...

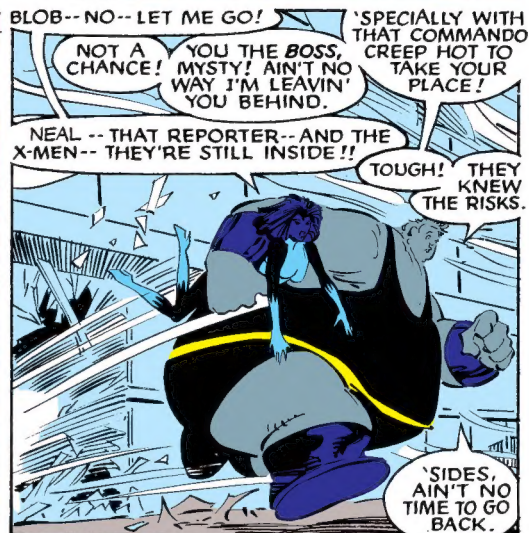
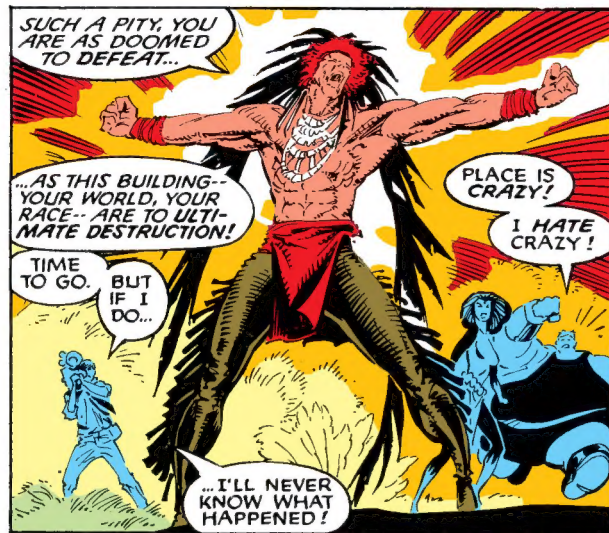
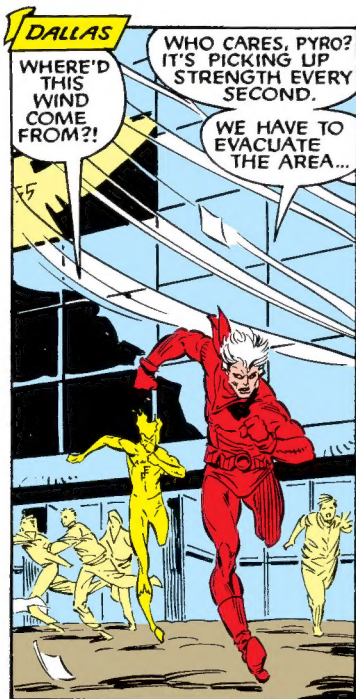
...OPEN THE GATEWAY  
I CONSTRUCTED...



...AND  
SEND US  
HOME!!









Digitized by

Syl3nt  
Bob and

OKO



CHARS 20